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THE FIRST MEN IN THE MOON
ALL NEW MARVEL CLASSICS COMICS
THE FIRST MEN IN THE MOON
ADAPTED FROM THE CLASSIC NOVEL BY JULES VERNE
MARVEL PRESENTS A FANTASTIC COMICS VERSION WITH ALL THE THRILLS OF THE ORIGINAL CLASSIC!

STAN LEE presents

THE FIRST MEN IN THE MOON

by H. G. WELLS

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Herbert George Wells (H.G. Wells) was born in September of 1866 at Bromley, Kent, England. At an early age, he developed an interest in the natural sciences, particularly biology. He married early after becoming a pupil-teacher at age 17, but that marriage did not last. He left his past behind him, immediately becoming a successful journalist and short story writer and, eventually remarried (as it turned out, one of his previous biology students).

Much of H.G. Wells explorations into fiction, primarily his early novels, dealt with science fiction and veiled attempts at prophecy. Wells' scientific background added greatly to his success in this genre, as did his acute natural perception in the field of sociology, showing the depth of human response in what might otherwise be considered outrageous fantasy. His first such novel was THE TIME MACHINE (see Marvel Classic comics #2). WAR OF THE WORLDS was third, following THE INVISIBLE MAN.

Because of his attempts at prophecy, Wells became a key member of the Fabian Society of London, where he would meet George Bernard Shaw. Shaw and Wells were often at odds and much of that period's experiences are recorded in Wells' novels ANN VERONICA and THE NEW MACHIAVELLI.

Wells also wrote a comprehensive OUTLINE OF HISTORY and some lesser known non-fiction works before he died in 1946.

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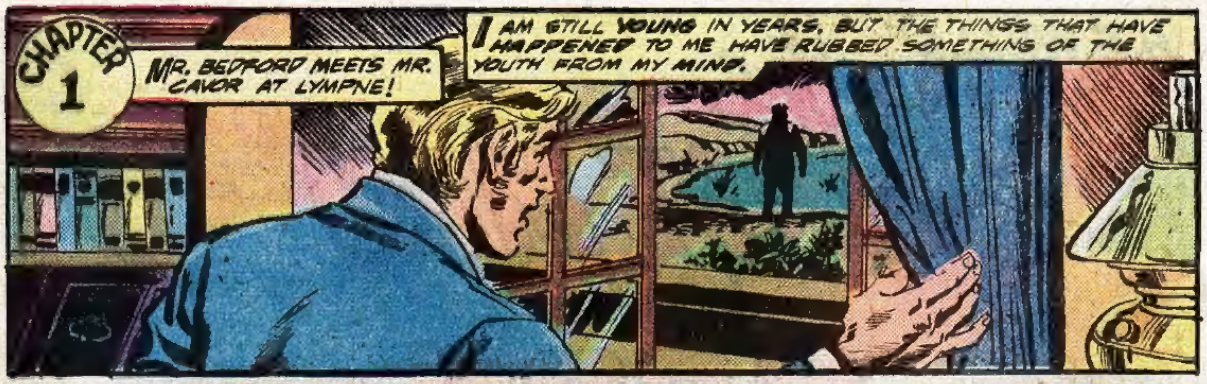
H.G.WELLS'
the FIRST MEN in the MOON
"AS I SIT DOWN HERE ADMIDST THE SHADOWS OF THE VINE-LEAVES UNDER THE BLUE SKY OF SOUTHERN ITALY IT COMES TO ME WITH ASTONISHMENT THAT MY PARTICIPATION IN THESE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF MR. CAVOR WAS AFTER ALL, THE OUTCOME OF PUREST ACCIDENT.
"IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN ANYONE.
"I FELL INTO THESE THINGS AT A TIME WHEN I THOUGHT MYSELF REMOVED FROM THE SLIGHTEST POSSIBILITY OF--
"--DISTURBING EXPERIENCES.


CHAPTER 1
MR. BEDFORD MEETS MR. CAVOR AT LYMPNE!
I AM STILL YOUNG IN YEARS, BUT THE THINGS THAT HAVE HAPPENED TO ME HAVE RUBBED SOMETHING OF THE YOUTH FROM MY MIND.

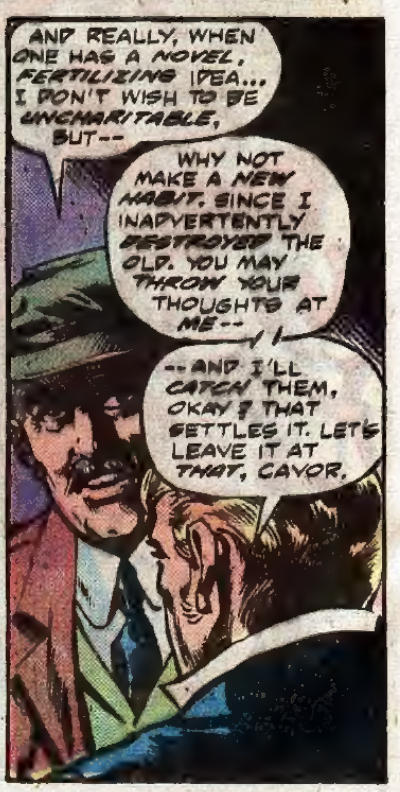
IT IS SCARCELY NECESSARY TO GO INTO THE DETAILS OF THE CIRCULATIONS THAT LANDED ME AT LYMPNE IN KENT.
I FIRST SET EYES ON CAVOR, AS I WAS STRUGGLING TO WRITE A PLAY... HOLDING DOWN MY MIND TO THE SHEER HARD WORK OF IT.
ZUZZOO... ZUZZOO
ONE MOMENT, SIR.

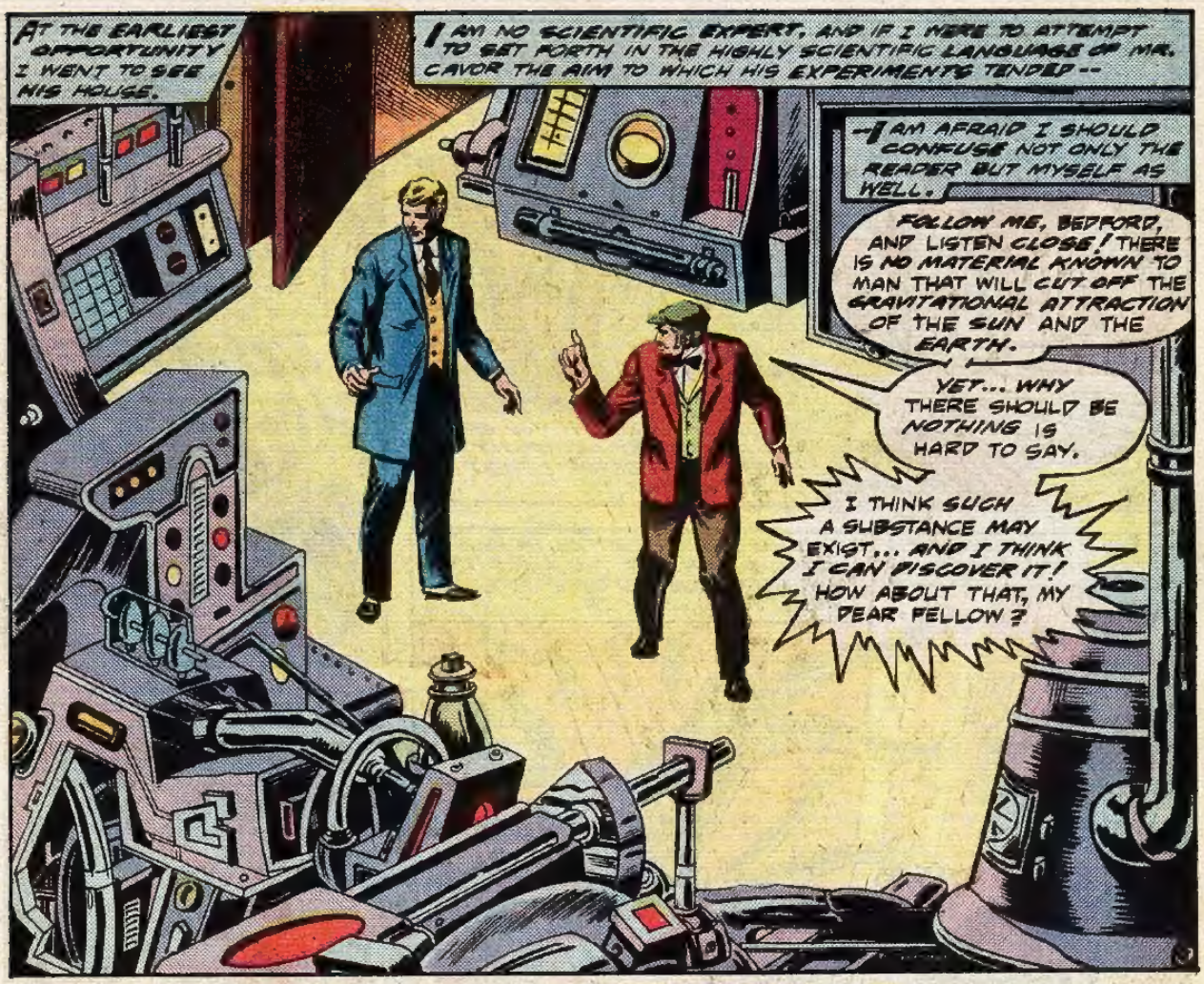
THIS IS YOUR TIME FOR EXERCISE, I PRESUME?
IT IS. I COME TO ENJOY THE SUNSET AND NIGHT.
YOU DON'T. I'VE WATCHED YOU THIRTEEN NIGHTS... AND NOT ONCE HAVE YOU LOOKED AT THE SUNSET... AND YOU DISTURB MY CREATIVE TASK WITH YOUR HUMMING.

DO I DO--
--THAT?

THE NEXT EVENING, I SAW NOTHING OF HIM, NOR THE NEXT. THE THIRD DAY, HE CALLED ON ME.
YOU SEE, I DON'T BLAME YOU IN THE LEAST... BUT--
--YOU'VE DESTROYED A HABIT AND IT DISORGANIZES MY DAY.

THIS WALK IS VITAL, YOU SEE, I'M... I'M AN INVESTIGATOR... AND I'M ENGAGED IN... SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH.
I CANNOT TELL MY COLLEAGUES... THERE IS SO MUCH PETTINESS... SO MUCH INTRIGUE!


AND REALLY, WHEN ONE HAS A NOVEL, FERTILIZING IDEA... I DON'T WISH TO BE UNCHARITABLE, BUT--
WHY NOT MAKE A NEW HABIT, SINCE I INADVERTENTLY DESTROYED THE OLD. YOU MAY THROW YOUR THOUGHTS AT ME--
--AND I'LL CATCH THEM, OKAY? THAT SETTLES IT. LET'S LEAVE IT AT THAT, CAVOR.


AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY I WENT TO SEE HIS HOUSE.
I AM NO SCIENTIFIC EXPERT, AND IF I WERE TO ATTEMPT TO SET FORTH IN THE HIGHLY SCIENTIFIC LANGUAGE OF MR. CAVOR THE AIM TO WHICH HIS EXPERIMENTS TENDED --
--I AM AFRAID I SHOULD CONFUSE NOT ONLY THE READER BUT MYSELF AS WELL.
FOLLOW ME, BEDFORD, AND LISTEN CLOSE! THERE IS NO MATERIAL KNOWN TO MAN THAT WILL CUT OFF THE GRAVITATIONAL ATTRACTION OF THE SUN AND THE EARTH.
YET... WHY THERE SHOULD BE NOTHING IS HARD TO SAY.
I THINK SUCH A SUBSTANCE MAY EXIST... AND I THINK I CAN DISCOVER IT! HOW ABOUT THAT, MY DEAR FELLOW?

I DO NOT RECALL THAT I GAVE MY PLAY AN HOUR'S WORK AT ANY ONE TIME AFTER MY VISIT TO HIS HOUSE.

MY IMAGINATION HAD OTHER THINGS TO DO.

HOW ABOUT IT? IT IS FANTASTIC, CAVOR! YOU HAVE NOT EVEN BEGUN TO SEE THE POSSIBILITIES.

MEANING?

THIS IS THE YEAR 1899, CAVOR, 1900 APPROACHES... AN EPOCH... ONCE IN A THOUSAND YEARS A CHANCE LIKE THIS COMES ALONG!

WHEN YOU FIND YOUR... CAVORITE ...OR WHATEVER YOU CALL IT... WE'LL BE WEALTHY ENOUGH TO WORK ANY SORT OF SOCIAL REVOLUTION WE FANCY.

WE WILL?

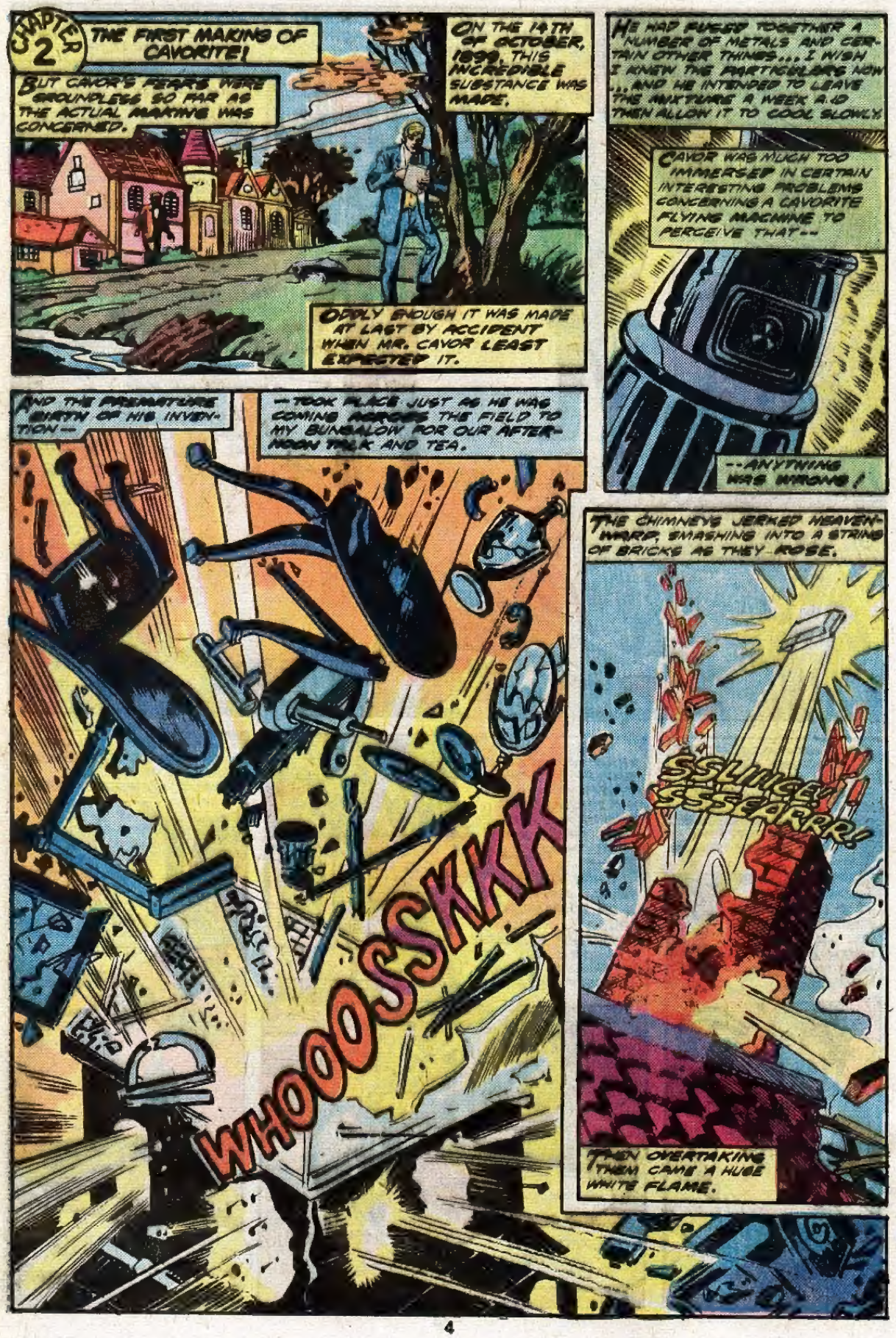
BEDFORD... ARE YOU FEELING SICKLY?

CAVOR, WE CAN OWN AND ORDER THE WHOLE WORLD! THERE ARE COMPANIES AND PATENTS AND...

IT IS JUST POSSIBLE, YOU KNOW, THAT WE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO MAKE IT AFTER ALL... OR WHEN WE MAKE IT, THERE MAY BE SOME LITTLE HITCH--

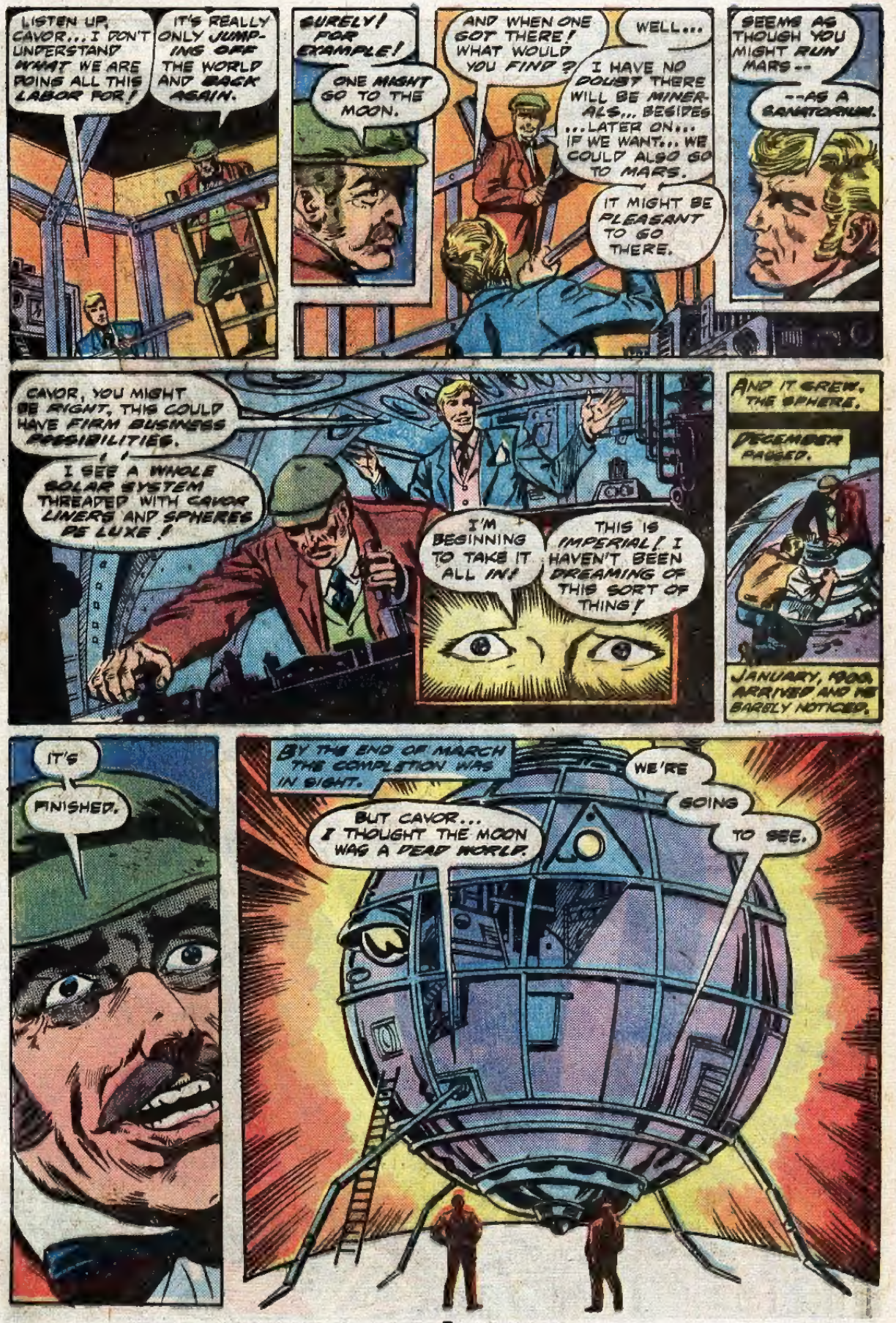
WE'LL TACKLE THE HITCH--

--WHEN IT COMES.

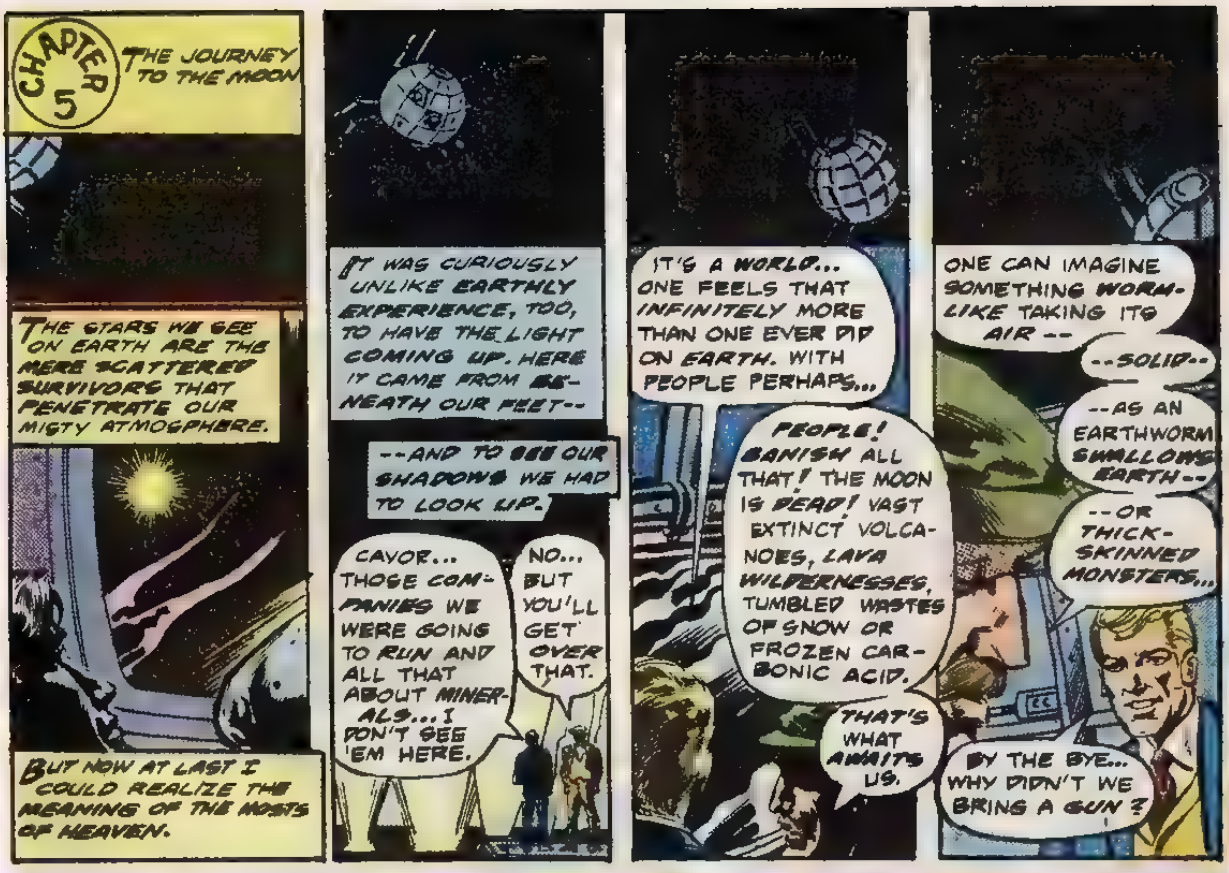

CHAPTER 2
THE FIRST MAKING OF CAVORITE!
BUT CAVOR'S FEARS WERE GROUNDLESS SO FAR AS THE ACTUAL MAKING WAS CONCERNED.
ON THE 14TH OF OCTOBER, 1899, THIS INCREDIBLE SUBSTANCE WAS MADE.
ODDLY ENOUGH IT WAS MADE AT LAST BY ACCIDENT WHEN MR. CAVOR LEAST EXPECTED IT.
HE HAD FUSED TOGETHER A NUMBER OF METALS AND CERTAIN OTHER THINGS... I WISH I KNEW THE PARTICULARS NOW ... AND HE INTENDED TO LEAVE THE MIXTURE A WEEK AND THEN ALLOW IT TO COOL SLOWLY.
CAVOR WAS MUCH TOO IMMERSED IN CERTAIN INTERESTING PROBLEMS CONCERNING A CAVORITE FLYING MACHINE TO PERCEIVE THAT--
--ANYTHING WAS WRONG!
AND THE PREMATURE BIRTH OF HIS INVENTION--
--TOOK PLACE JUST AS HE WAS COMING ACROSS THE FIELD TO MY BUNGALOW FOR OUR AFTERNOON TALK AND TEA.
WHOOOSSKKK
THE CHIMNEYS JERKED HEAVENWARD, SMASHING INTO A STRING OF BRICKS AS THEY ROSE.
SSLLIICCEE SSSPARRR!
THEN OVERTAKING THEM CAME A HUGE WHITE FLAME.

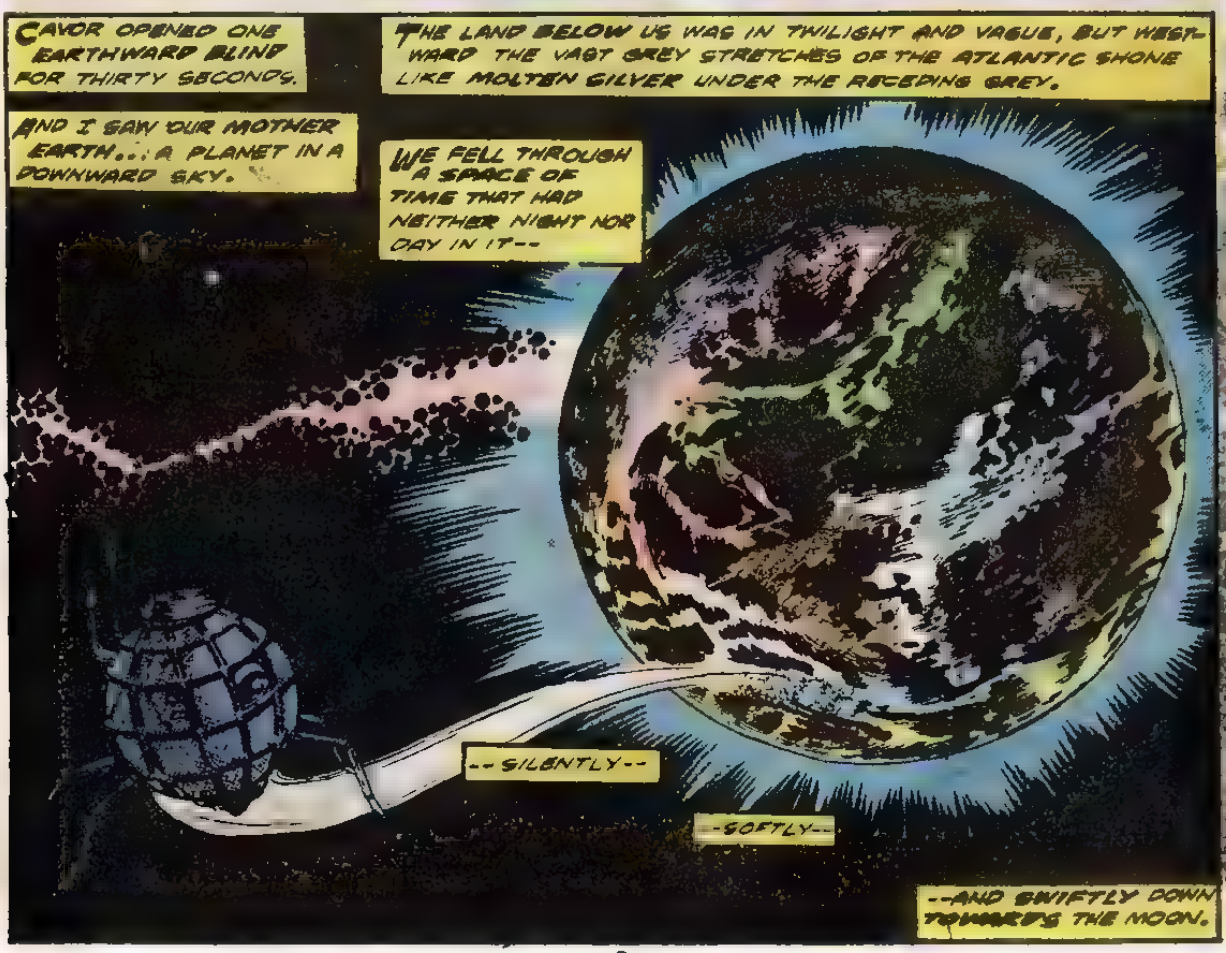
THE TREES ABOUT THE BUILDING SWAYED--
--AND WHIRLED--
--AND TORE THEMSELVES TO PIECES--
RRRR!!!PPP!
--THAT SPRANG TOWARD THE FLARE.
MY EARS WERE SMITTEN WITH A CLAP OF THUNDER--
--THAT LEFT ME DEAF ON ONE SIDE FOR LIFE--
--AND ALL ABOUT ME WINDOWS SMASHED UNNEEDED.
A MASS OF SMOKE AND ASHES--
--AND A SQUARE BLUISH SHINING SUBSTANCE RUSHED UP TOWARDS THE ZENITH.
'GRATULATE ME.
CONGRATULATE YOU! GOOD HEAVENS! WHAT FOR?
I'VE DONE IT.
I SUPPOSE YOU KNOW... EVERYBODY KNOWS NOWADAYS... THAT AIR HAS WEIGHT... THAT IT HAS A PRESSURE OF 14½ POUNDS TO THE SQUARE INCH.
I KNOW THAT. GO ON.
YOU SEE, OUR CAVORITE NEGATED THE PRESSURE OF THE AIR ABOVE IT, WHILE THE AIR PRESSURE AROUND THE CAVORITE REMAINED.
THE AIR ABOVE THE CAVORITE WAS FORCED UPWARD VIOLENTLY... THE AIR THAT RUSHED IN TO REPLACE IT IMMEDIATELY LOST WEIGHT--
--AND GLEN THROUGH THE CEILING AND THE ROOF.
WHY IT COULD HAVE SQUIRTED ALL THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE EARTH AWAY IF THE CAVORITE HADN'T BEEN LOST AND SUCKED AWAY!
IT WILL BE NICE, I THINK IF NOTHING WERE SAID OF THIS AFFAIR BEYOND OURSELVES.
IF MY ASSISTANTS HAVE NOT BEEN KILLED ... THEY WILL ACCEPT THE CYCLONE STORY I WILL TELL THEM.
A MAN OF SUCH POSSIBILITIES, I REFLECTED, IS NO ORDINARY GUEST TO ENTERTAIN.

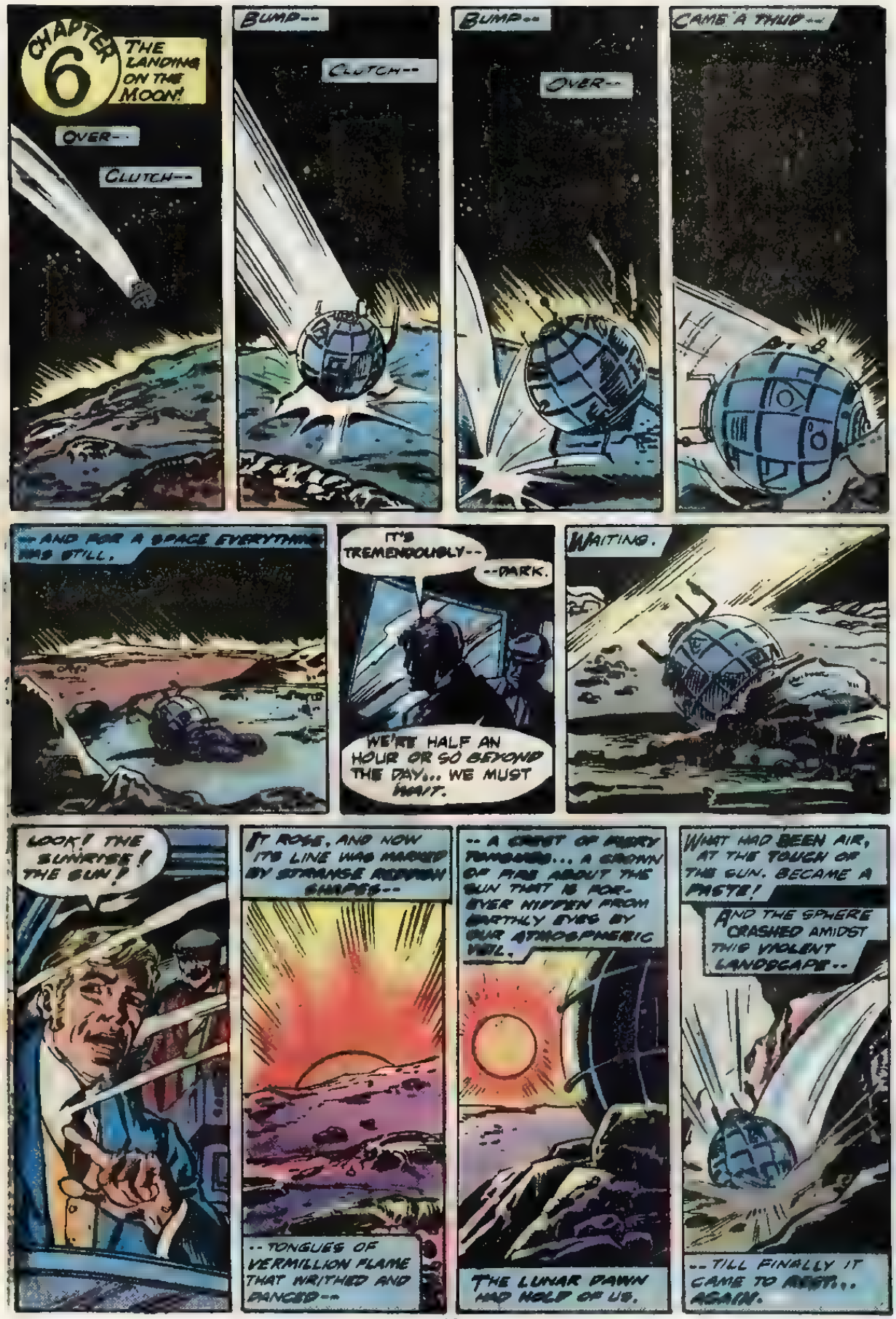
CHAPTER 3
THE BUILDING OF THE SPHERE!
I REMEMBER DISTINCTLY THE OCCASION WHEN CAVOR TOLD ME OF HIS IDEA OF THE SPHERE.
THAT'S IT! THAT FINISHES IT!
FINISHES WHAT?
SPACE... ANYWHERE! THE MOON!
SPILLASSH
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
MEAN? WHY... IT MUST BE A SPHERE! THAT'S WHAT I MEAN.
SUPPOSE... JUST SUPPOSE NOW, BEDFORD, THAT I LEFT THE CAVORITE LOOSE AND QUITE FREE TO GO UP!
IMAGINE A SPHERE LARGE ENOUGH TO HOLD TWO MEN AND ENAMELED AS IT WERE ON THE OUTER STEEL...
CAVORITE?
YES!
WE'LL NEED A MANHOLE ENTRANCE... AIR TIGHT.
LIKE JULES VERNE'S APPARATUS IN 'A TRIP TO THE MOON?'
BUT CAVOR WAS NOT A READER OF FICTION.
I BEGIN TO SEE... AND YOU COULD GET IN AND SCREW YOURSELF UP WHILE THE CAVORITE WAS WARM... AND AS SOON AS IT COOLED IT WOULD BECOME IMPERVIOUS TO GRAVITATION...
...AND OFF YOU WOULD FLY.
THE STEEL SPHERE CAN BE MADE IN SECTIONS ...EACH SECTION CAPABLE OF ROLLING UP AFTER THE FASHION OF A ROLLER BLIND.
WHEN ALL THESE BLINDS ARE SHUT, NO LIGHT, NO HEAT, NO GRAVITATION WILL GET INSIDE THE SPHERE--
--BUT OPEN A BLIND--
--THEN AT ONCE ANY HEAVY BODY THAT CHANCES TO BE IN THAT DIRECTION WILL ATTRACT US.
PRACTICALLY WE SHALL BE ABLE TO TACK ABOUT IN SPACE JUST AS WE WISH, GET ATTRACTED BY THIS AND THAT.


LISTEN UP, CAVOR... I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT WE ARE DOING ALL THIS LABOR FOR!
IT'S REALLY ONLY JUMPING OFF THE WORLD AND BACK AGAIN.
SURELY! FOR EXAMPLE!
ONE MIGHT GO TO THE MOON.
AND WHEN ONE GOT THERE! WHAT WOULD YOU FIND?
WELL...
I HAVE NO DOUBT THERE WILL BE MINERALS... BESIDES ...LATER ON... IF WE WANT... WE COULD ALSO GO TO MARS.
IT MIGHT BE PLEASANT TO GO THERE.
SEEMS AS THOUGH YOU MIGHT RUN MARS--
--AS A SANATORIUM.
CAVOR, YOU MIGHT BE RIGHT, THIS COULD HAVE FIRM BUSINESS POSSIBILITIES.
I SEE A WHOLE SOLAR SYSTEM THREADED WITH CAVOR LINERS AND SPHERES DE LUXE!
I'M BEGINNING TO TAKE IT ALL IN!
THIS IS IMPERIAL! I HAVEN'T BEEN DREAMING OF THIS SORT OF THING!
AND IT GREW, THE SPHERE.
DECEMBER PASSED.
JANUARY, 1900, ARRIVED AND WE BARELY NOTICED.
IT'S
FINISHED.
BY THE END OF MARCH THE COMPLETION WAS IN SIGHT.
BUT CAVOR... I THOUGHT THE MOON WAS A DEAD WORLD.
WE'RE
GOING
TO SEE.

CHAPTER 4
INSIDE THE SPHERE!
"GO ON", SAID CAVOR AS I SAT ACROSS THE EDGE OF THE MANHOLE AND LOOKED DOWN INTO THE BLACK INTERIOR OF THE SPHERE.
WE TWO WERE ALONE.
HAVEN'T YOU BROUGHT ANYTHING TO READ?
GOOD LORD! NO!.
I FORGOT TO TELL YOU. THERE... ARE... UNCERTAINTIES--
--THE VOYAGE MAY LAST--
--WE MAY BE--
-- WEEKS!
CAVOR! MY NERVE'S IN RAGS... I DON'T THINK ...CONFOUND IT I'M A FOOL! WHAT BUSINESS HAVE I HERE?
I'M NOT COMING, CAVOR.
THE THING'S TOO RISKY. I'M GETTING OUT.
YOU CAN'T.
CAN'T!?
WE'LL SOON SEE ABOUT THAT!


CHAPTER 5
THE JOURNEY TO THE MOON
THE STARS WE SEE ON EARTH ARE THE MERE SCATTERED SURVIVORS THAT PENETRATE OUR MIGTY ATMOSPHERE.
BUT NOW AT LAST I COULD REALIZE THE MEANING OF THE MOSTS OF HEAVEN.
IT WAS CURIOUSLY UNLIKE EARTHLY EXPERIENCE, TOO, TO HAVE THE LIGHT COMING UP. HERE IT CAME FROM BENEATH OUR FEET--
--AND TO SEE OUR SHADOWS WE HAD TO LOOK UP.
CAVOR... THOSE COMPANIES WE WERE GOING TO RUN AND ALL THAT ABOUT MINERALS... I DON'T SEE 'EM HERE.
NO... BUT YOU'LL GET OVER THAT.
IT'S A WORLD... ONE FEELS THAT INFINITELY MORE THAN ONE EVER DID ON EARTH. WITH PEOPLE PERHAPS...
PEOPLE! BANISH ALL THAT! THE MOON IS DEAD! VAST EXTINCT VOLCANOES, LAVA WILDERNESSES, TUMBLED WASTES OF SNOW OR FROZEN CARBONIC ACID.
THAT'S WHAT AWAITS US.
ONE CAN IMAGINE SOMETHING WORM-LIKE TAKING ITS AIR --
--SOLID--
--AS AN EARTHWORM SWALLOWS EARTH--
--OR THICK-SKINNED MONSTERS...
BY THE BYE... WHY DIDN'T WE BRING A GUN?


CAVOR OPENED ONE EARTHWARD EYE FOR THIRTY SECONDS.
AND I SAW OUR MOTHER EARTH... A PLANET IN A DOWNWARD SKY.
THE LAND BELOW US WAS IN TWILIGHT AND VAGUE, BUT WESTWARD THE VAST GREY STRETCHES OF THE ATLANTIC SHONE LIKE MOLTEN SILVER UNDER THE RECEDING GREY.
WE FELL THROUGH A SPACE OF TIME THAT HAD NEITHER NIGHT NOR DAY IN IT--
--SILENTLY--
--SOFTLY--
--AND SWIFTLY DOWN TOWARDS THE MOON.

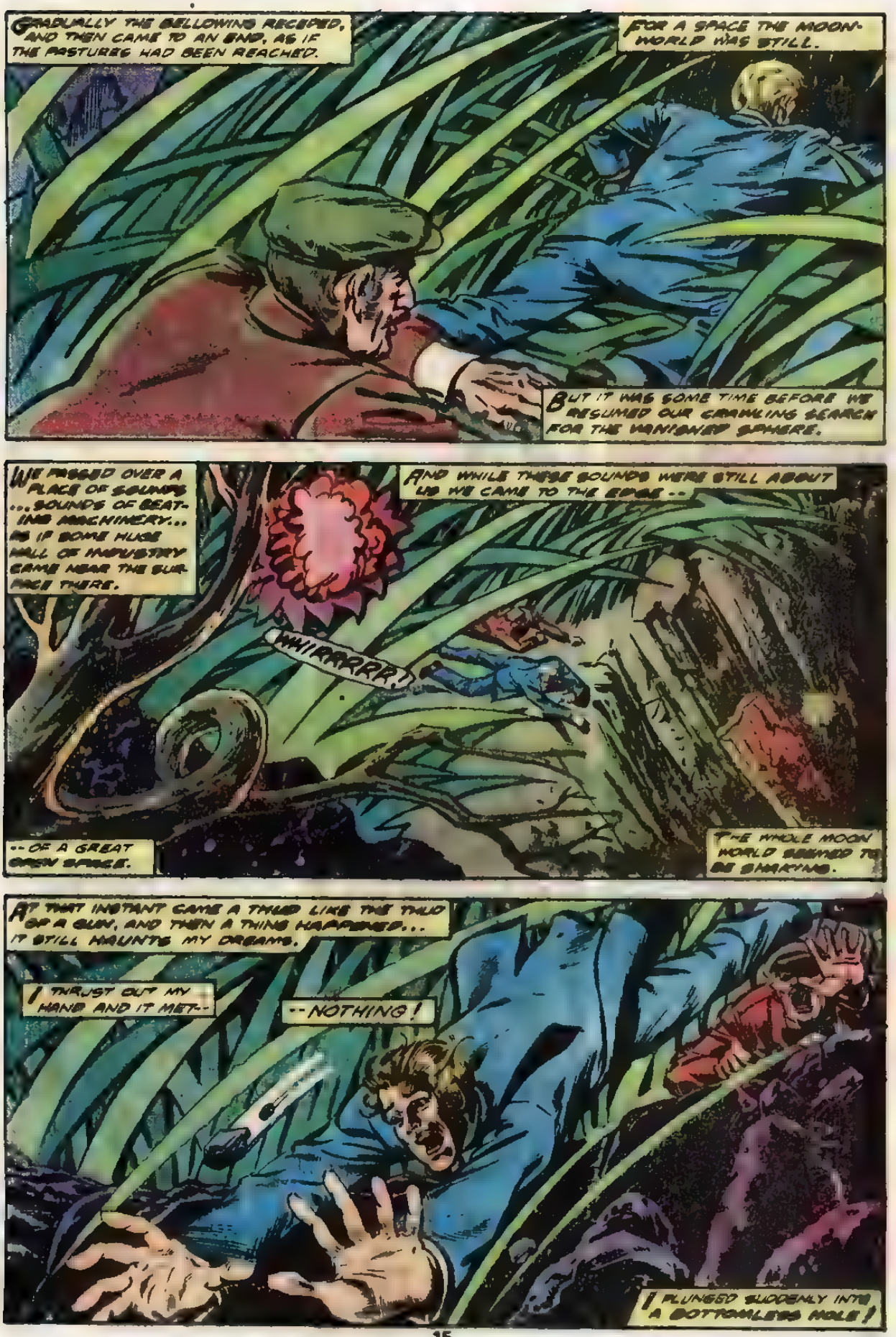

CHAPTER 6
THE LANDING ON THE MOON!
OVER--
CLUTCH--
BUMP--
CLUTCH--
BUMP--
OVER--
CAME A THUD--
--AND FOR A SPACE EVERYTHING WAS STILL.
IT'S TREMENDOUSLY--
--DARK.
WE'RE HALF AN HOUR OR SO BEYOND THE DAY... WE MUST WAIT.
WAITING.
LOOK! THE SUNRISE! THE SUN!
IT ROSE, AND NOW ITS LINE WAS MARKED BY STRANGE RED-BROWN SHAPES--
--TONGUES OF VERMILLION FLAME THAT WRITHED AND DANCED--
-- A CREST OF RUDDY TURMOIL... A CROWN OF FIRE ABOUT THE SUN THAT IS FOREVER HIDDEN FROM EARTHLY EYES BY OUR ATMOSPHERIC VEIL.
THE LUNAR DAWN HAD HOLD OF US.
WHAT HAD BEEN AIR, AT THE TOUCH OF THE GUN, BECAME A PASTE!
AND THE SPHERE CRASHED AMIDST THIS VIOLENT LANDSCAPE--
--TILL FINALLY IT CAME TO REST.. AGAIN.

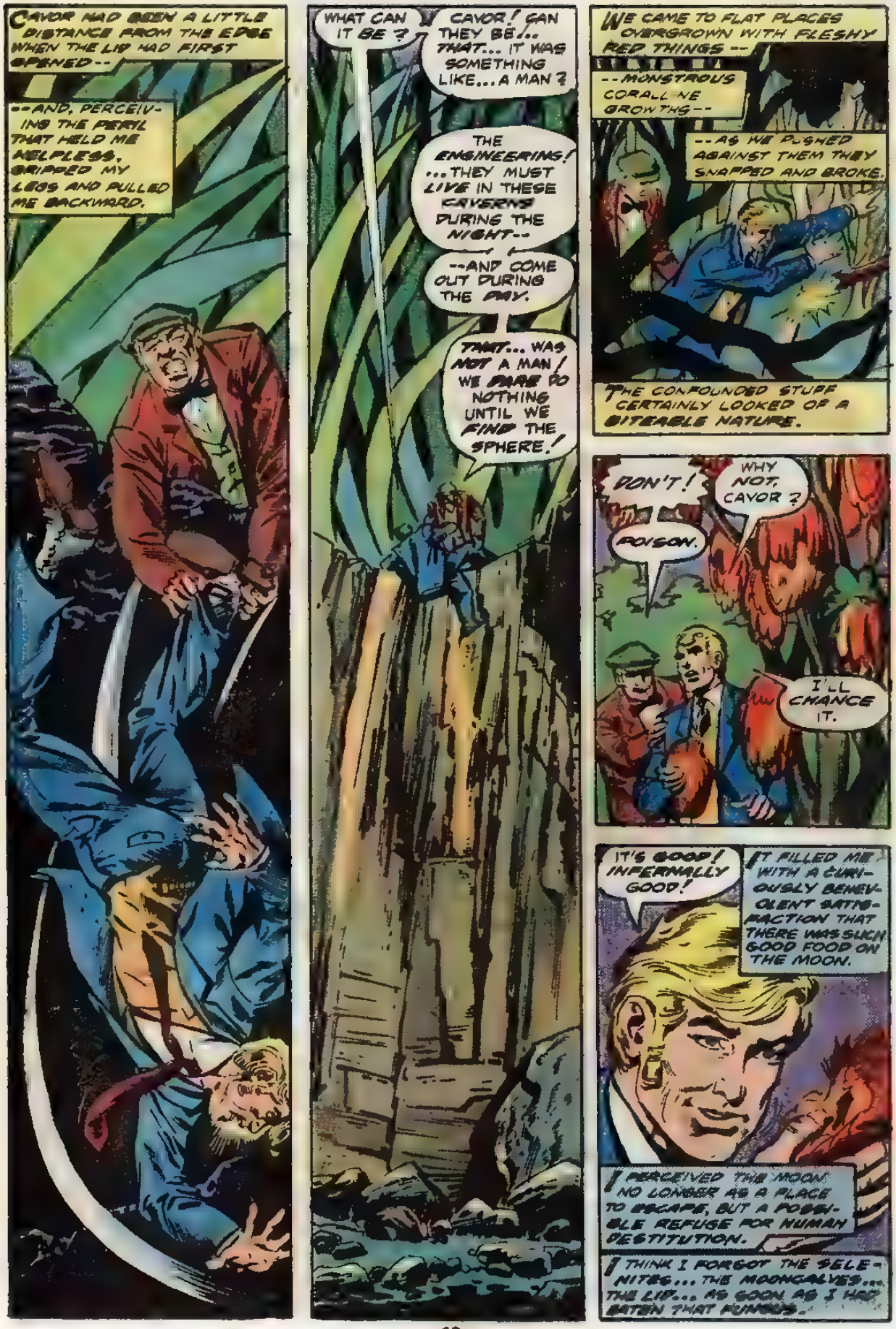
CHAPTER 7
A LUNAR MORNING!
THE SPHERE WAS LYING UPON A DRIFT OF SNOW.
AND SCATTERED HERE AND THERE UPON THE SLOPE--
--WERE SHAPES LIKE STICKS--
--DRY, TWISTED STICKS.
STICKS!
ON A LIFELESS WORLD?
CAVOR! IT MAY BE A DEAD WORLD NOW-- BUT ONCE--
WAIT A SEC... LOOK AT THAT... D'YOU SEE IT?
HOW CAN I DESCRIBE THE THING I SAW?
IT IS SO PETTY A THING TO STATE--
--AND YET IT SEEMED SO WONDERFUL, SO PREGNANT WITH EMOTION.
THE STICKS BEGAN TO SHOW A MINUTE LINE OF YELLOWISH-GREEN--
--THRUSTING OUTWARD TO MEET THE HOT ENCOURAGEMENT OF THE NEWLY RISEN SUN.
ONE AFTER ANOTHER THESE MIRACULOUS LITTLE BROWN BODIES BURST AND GAPED APART--
--LIKE SEEDPODS--
--LIKE THE HUSKS OF FRUITS!
IT IS A SEED!
LIFE!
IMAGINE THAT DAWN!
THE PLANTS HURRIED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE BRIEF DAY IN WHICH THEY MUST FLOWER AND FRUIT AND SEED AGAIN--
--AND DIE.
IT WAS A MIRACLE, THAT GROWTH.

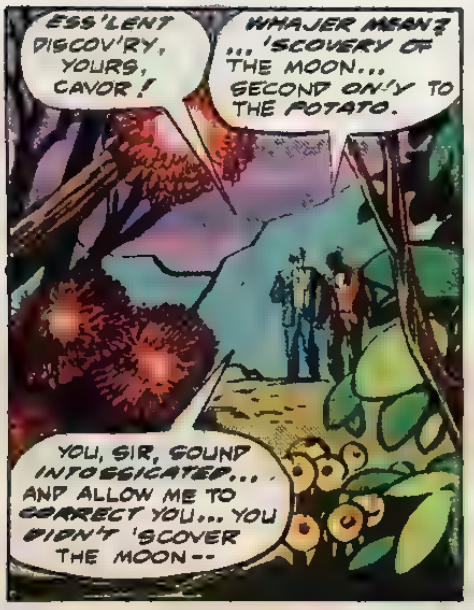
CHAPTER 8
PROSPECTING BEGINS!
FOR THESE PLANTS TO GROW THERE MUST BE SOME AIR... AIR THAT WE COULD ALSO BREATHE.
IT SEEMS SO DESERTED.
ABSOLUTELY DESOLATE.
I SEE NO TRACE OF ANY OTHER CREATURE.
THIS... IS NO WORLD... FOR MEN.
I TURNED... AND CAVOR--
--HAD VANISHED.
THE SPHERE TOO WAS NOT IN SIGHT.
JUMP, BEDFORD ...YOU ARE ONLY A SIXTH OF YOUR WEIGHT... IT'S FABULOUS FUN, YOU'LL ENJOY IT.
BUT BE CAREFUL! THE MOON HAS NO DISCIPLINE. SHE'LL LET US SMASH OURSELVES.
IT WAS HORRIBLE AND DELIGHTFUL--
--AND AS WILD AS A NIGHTMARE TO GO FLYING OFF IN THIS FASHION.
CAVOR! ONCE I GET GOING--
--HOW DO I--
--STOP?
WE WERE BITTEN BY A SPIRIT OF ENTERPRISE. WE MADE GARGANTUAN STRIDES--
--AND LEAPS THAT SPANNED MORE THAN TEN YARDS--
--UNTIL--
CAVOR, I HATE TO ASK THIS, I TRULY DO--
--BUT DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHERE THE SPHERE IS?
--HE DIDN'T!

CHAPTER 9
LOST MEN IN THE MOON!
WELL... WE LEFT IT...
SOMEWHERE...
IT CAME FROM BENEATH OUR FEET, A SOUND IN THE GROUND.
WE SEEMED TO HEAR IT WITH OUR FEET AS MUCH AS WITH OUR EARS.
SUBTERRANEAN! BELOW!
YEAH, WELL CAVOR, WHATEVER'S MAKING THE SOUND COULD... COME OUT, YOU KNOW?
AND EVEN AS WE STOOD THERE, WE BECAME AWARE OF A SOUND UPON THE MOON!
BOOM! BOOM!
THE SOUND WAS SUGGESTIVE OF SLEEPLESS NIGHTS IN CROWDED CITIES --
--OF VIGILS AND THE AWAITED HOUR--
--OF ALL THAT IS ORDERLY AND METHODICAL IN LIFE--
WE MUST GET BACK TO THE SPHERE. THIS IS BEYOND OUR UNDERSTANDING.
--BOOMING OUT PREGNANT AND MYSTERIOUS IN THIS FANTASTIC DESERT GROWTH!
THAT'S FINE, CAVOR... BUT WHICH WAY DO WE GO?
TAKE... YOUR PICK!
AND THOUGH IT ALL... A WARNING... A THREAT ...THROBBED THIS ENIGMA OF SOUND.
BOOM! BOOM!
GROOWWLLL!
AND EVER AND AGAIN CAME GUSTS OF TURMOIL... HAMMERING ...THE CLANGING AND THROB OF MACHINERY--
-- AND PRESENTLY--
--THE BELLOWING OF GREAT BEASTS!

CHAPTER 10
THE MOONCALF PASTURES!
SO WE TWO POOR TERRESTRIAL CASTAWAYS, LOST IN THAT WILD-GROWING MOON JUNGLE, CRAWLED IN TERROR BEFORE THE SOUNDS THAT HAD COME UPON US.
WE CRAWLED AS IT SEEMED A LONG TIME BEFORE WE SAW EITHER--
--SELENITE--
--OR MOONCALF.
SOMETIMES IT WOULD BE A CLOGGED, BESTIAL SOUND AS THOUGH THESE UNSEEN CREATURES HAD SOUGHT TO EAT AND BELLOW AT THE SAME TIME.
AND EVER MORE HOPELESSLY OUR EYES SOUGHT FOR OUR ABANDONED SPHERE.
UHHH... CAVOR?
SHUSH! BE QUIET NOW, BEDFORD. THERE'S NO DOUBT THESE CREATURES ARE NEARBY! JUST AHEAD PRESUMABLY.
I HAD A GLIMPSE OF A VAST RED PIT AS THE MOONCALF, AS WE CAME TO CALL IT, OPENED ITS MOUTH TO BLEAT AND BELLOW AGA'N--
AND I HAD A BREATH FROM THE PIT --
WHAT IS IT, BEDFORD?
AND THEN, THERE APPEARED A SELENITE, AS IF HE WERE HERDING THE MOONCALFS TO PASTURE.
HE HAD THE QUALITY OF A COMPLICATED INSECT, WITH WHIPLIKE ANTENNAE.
THE FORM OF HIS HEAD WAS HIDDEN BY HIS ENORMOUS, MANY-SPIKED HELMET THAT HE USED FOR PRODDING REFRACTORY MOONCALVES.
IF YOU HAVE EVER BEEN QUIET IN YOUR LIFE, BEDFORD--
-- NOW IS THE TIME TO DO SO.


GRADUALLY THE BELLOWING RECEDED, AND THEN CAME TO AN END, AS IF THE PASTURES HAD BEEN REACHED.
FOR A SPACE THE MOON-WORLD WAS STILL.
BUT IT WAS SOME TIME BEFORE WE RESUMED OUR CRAWLING SEARCH FOR THE MAINSHIP SPHERE.
WE PASSED OVER A PLACE OF SOUNDS ...SOUNDS OF BEATING MACHINERY... AS IF SOME HUGE HALL OF INDUSTRY CAME NEAR THE SURFACE THERE.
AND WHILE THESE SOUNDS WERE STILL ABOUT US WE CAME TO THE EDGE --
WHIRRRRR!
-- OF A GREAT OPEN SPACE.
THE WHOLE MOON WORLD SEEMED TO BE SHAKING.
AT THAT INSTANT CAME A THUD LIKE THE THUD OF A GUN, AND THEN A THING HAPPENED... IT STILL HAUNTS MY DREAMS.
I THRUST OUT MY HAND AND IT MET--
--NOTHING!
I PLUNGED SUDDENLY INTO A BOTTOMLESS HOLE!


CAVOR HAD BEEN A LITTLE DISTANCE FROM THE EDGE WHEN THE LID HAD FIRST OPENED--
--AND, PERCEIVING THE PERIL THAT HELD ME HELPLESS, GRIPPED MY LEGS AND PULLED ME BACKWARD.
WHAT CAN IT BE?
CAVOR! CAN THEY BE... THAT... IT WAS SOMETHING LIKE... A MAN?
THE ENGINEERING! ...THEY MUST LIVE IN THESE CAVERNS DURING THE NIGHT--
--AND COME OUT DURING THE DAY.
THAT... WAS NOT A MAN! WE DARE DO NOTHING UNTIL WE FIND THE SPHERE!
WE CAME TO FLAT PLACES OVERGROWN WITH FLESHY RED THINGS --
--MONSTROUS CORALLINE GROWTHS--
--AS WE PUSHED AGAINST THEM THEY SNAPPED AND BROKE.
THE CONFOUNDED STUFF CERTAINLY LOOKED OF A BITEABLE NATURE.
DON'T!
WHY NOT, CAVOR?
POISON.
I'LL CHANCE IT.
IT'S GOOD! INFERNALLY GOOD!
IT FILLED ME WITH A CURIOUSLY BENEVOLENT SATISFACTION THAT THERE WAS SUCH GOOD FOOD ON THE MOON.
I PERCEIVED THE MOON NO LONGER AS A PLACE TO ESCAPE, BUT A POSSIBLE REFUGE FOR HUMAN DESTITUTION.
I THINK I FORGOT THE SELENITES... THE MOONCALVES... THE LID... AS SOON AS I HAD EATEN THAT FUNGUS.


ESS'LENT DISCOV'RY, YOURS, CAVOR!
WHAJER MEAN? ... 'SCOVERY OF THE MOON... SECOND ON'Y TO THE POTATO.
YOU, SIR, SOUND INTOXICATED... AND ALLOW ME TO CORRECT YOU... YOU DIDN'T 'SCOVER THE MOON--

--YOU ONLY REACHED IT.
WE ARE THE CREACHURS O' WHAT WE EAT AND DRINK.

LISSEN, CAVOR... WE MUST ANNEX THE MOON ... LIKE C'LUMBUS AND 'MERICA... NO SHILLY-SHALLY. THIS IS PART OF THE WHITE MAN'S BURDEN... GOTTA COLON... COLONI...IZE... Y'KNOW THE WORD.

LOOK AT 'IM, BEDFORD! INSECTS AND THEY THINK I'M GOING TO CRAWL ON MY STOMACH. LOOK AT ME SHOW 'EM!
HE LEAPED... BADLY, SOMERSAULTING, WHIRLED RIGHT OVER THEM. WHAT THE SELENITES MADE OF THIS AMAZING AND UNDIGNIFIED IRRUPTION FROM ANOTHER PLANET, I HAVE NO MEANS OF GUESSING.

I TRIPPED AND FELL HEAVILY AMONG THE ROCKS.
MY NEXT CLEAR RECOLLECTION IS THAT WE WERE PRISONERS--
--AT WE KNEW NOT WHAT DEPTH BENEATH THE MOON'S SURFACE.

CHAPTER 11
THE SELENITE'S FACE
WE FOUND OURSELVES SITTING CROUCHED TOGETHER IN A TUMULTUOUS DARKNESS.
CAVOR, WHY AM I TIED? WHY HAVE YOU TIED ME HAND AND FOOT?
I HAVEN'T TIED YOU ...IT'S THE SELENITES.
WHERE ARE WE?
HOW SHOULD I KNOW?
ARE WE DEAD?
WHAT NONSENSE!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN TO DO?
HOW SHOULD I KNOW WHAT TO DO?
HE WAS THERE ALL AT ONCE. IT SEEMED AS THOUGH IT DID NOT HAVE A FACE ...MORE, A MIRROR--
A DEFORMITY THAT WOULD PRESENTLY BE MY ANSWER OR EXPLANATION.
THERE WAS NO NOSE--
--AND THE THING HAD BULGING EYES AT THE SIDE.
THE NECK ON WHICH THE HEAD WAS POISED WAS JOINTED IN THREE PLACES, ALMOST LIKE THE SHORT JOINTS IN THE LEG OF A CRAB.
PRESENTLY THE SELENITE FLICKERED INTO THE SHADOW--
--STOOD FOR A MOMENT RETROSPECTIVE AT THE DOOR--
--AND THEN CLOSED IT ON US--
--AND ONCE MORE WE WERE IN THAT MURMUROUS MYSTERY OF DARKNESS INTO WHICH WE HAD AWAKENED.

CHAPTER 12
MR CAVOR MAKES SOME SUGGESTIONS
THEY'VE GOT US.
IT WAS THAT FUNGUS.
WELL, IF I HADN'T TAKEN IT WE SHOULD HAVE FAINTED AND STARVED.
WE MIGHT HAVE FOUND THE SPHERE... AND WE NEVER THOUGHT OF A WORLD INSIDE THE MOON. WE GET INTO HABITS OF THE MIND.
IF THE SELENITES DISCOVER THE SPHERE WILL THEY RUIN IT... LEAVING US STRANDED HERE FOR THE REST OF OUR LIVES !
OH, WHY DIDN'T I STICK TO WRITING MY PLAY ? I SEEM TO EXIST ONLY TO DO PREPOSTEROUS THINGS -
HOPPING ABOUT LOOKING FOR PATENTS AND CONCESSIONS IN THE CRATERS OF THE MOON !
I WAS EQUAL TO WRITING A PLAY. THAT WAS MY WORLD AND THE LIFE I WAS MADE FOR--
--AND NOW I'VE LEAPED TO THE MOON ...AND THROWN MY LIFE AWAY !

THE DARKNESS HAD GIVEN WAY TO BLUISH LIGHT AGAIN.
SEVERAL NOISELESS SELENITES WERE COMING INTO THE CHAMBER. I BECAME QUITE STILL STARING AT THEIR GROTESQUE FACES.
I PERCEIVED THAT THE FOREMOST AND SECOND CARRIED BOWLS.
ONE ELEMENTAL NEED AT LEAST OUR MINDS COULD UNDERSTAND IN COMMON.
FROM A PARTLY DIVIDED CARCASS OF A MOONCALF THAT WE PRESENTLY SAW I AM INCLINED TO BELIEVE IT MUST HAVE BEEN MOONCALF FLESH.
THEIR TENTACLE HANDS WERE SOFT AND COLD TO MY SKIN.
WE ATE AND PRESENTLY DRANK LIKE TRAMPS IN A SOUP KITCHEN.
THE PROBLEM IS COMMUNICATION. PERHAPS SOME BASIC PRINCIPLES OF GEOMETRY THEY MIGHT RECOGNIZE.
IF I WERE UNCHAINED, I COULD DRAW A GEOMETRIC FIGURE IN THE DUST, AND TRY MY THEORY.
FINE, CAVOR... FINE.
I COULD NEVER HAVE BELIEVED THAT A QUARTER OF A MILLION MILES OUT OF OUR PROPER WORLD--
--IN UTTER PERPLEXITY OF SOUL--
--SURROUNDED--
--WATCHED--
--TOUCHED BY BEINGS MORE GROTESQUE AND INHUMAN THAN THE WORST CREATURES OF A NIGHTMARE--
--IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR ME TO EAT IN UTTER FORGETFULNESS OF ALL THESE THINGS.

CHAPTER 13
EXPERIMENTS IN INTERCOURSE!
I THINK THAT OUR INCURABLE ANTHROPOMORPHISM MADE US IMAGINE THERE WERE HUMAN HEADS INSIDE THEIR MASKS, AS THEY TOUCHED US TO RE-ADJUST OUR CHAINS.
THEY SEEM TO BE RELEASING US. REMEMBER WE ARE ON THE MOON! MAKE NO SUDDEN MOVEMENTS!
WE HAD TAKEN IT AS A NATURAL THING THAT A SUBTERRANEAN CAVERN SHOULD BE ARTIFICIALLY LIT, UNTIL WE CAME ON THE HUGE APPARATUS.
ABOUT IT MOVE THE SHAPES OF TENDERS. OUT OF THE TOP OF THE VERTICAL CYLINDER CAME POURING THIS INCANDESCENT SUBSTANCE --
THUD! THUD! THUD!
--THAT LIT THE PLACE AND RAN OVER AS MILK RUNS OVER A BOILING POT.
BY SOME DEFECT OF REASONING CAVOR SEEMED TO IMAGINE THAT BROKEN ENGLISH MIGHT HELP US COMMUNICATE. HE EXPERIMENTED...
NO, NO! ME NOT COME ON ONE MINUTE.
ME LOOK AT 'IM.
THUD! THUD! THUD!
ABOVE --
--BELOW--
--IN EVERY DIRECTION--
THUD! THUD!
--WAS THE UNKNOWN, AND THESE INHUMAN CREATURES --
--AND WE TWO UNSUPPORTED MEN.

CHAPTER 14
THE GIDDY BRIDGE!
JUST FOR A MOMENT THAT HOSTILE PAUSE ENDURED. I SUPPOSE THAT ME AND THE SELENITES DID SOME VERY RAPID THINKING.
WE CAN'T DO ANYTHING. WE MUST GO... AS THEY WANT US TO GO.
THEY MUST THINK WE ARE MERELY STRANGE ANIMALS... SOME WILD SORT OF MOONCALF BIRTH.
I THINK THESE MAY BE SELENITES OF A LOWER CLASS. THIS COULD BE THE OUTER FRINGE OF THEIR WORLD.
IT MUST GO DOWN--
--AND DOWN.
WE REACHED AN EDGE. AND THE SHINING STREAM GAVE ONE MEANDER OF HESITATION--
--AND THEN RUSHED OVER!
WE CAN'T CROSS THIS AT ANY PRICE.
I COULD NOT GO THREE STEPS ON IT... EVEN WITH MY HANDS FREE.
THEY CAN'T KNOW WHAT IT IS TO BE GIDDY. HOW--
--HOW CAN WE MAKE THEM UNDERSTAND?

I DON'T BELIEVE THEY SEE AS WE DO. I WONDER IF THEY KNOW THIS IS SIMPLY BLACKNESS FOR US.
ANYHOW, WE MUST MAKE THEM UNDERSTAND.
I THINK WE SAID THESE THINGS WITH A VAGUE HALF HOPE THE SELENITES MIGHT SOMEHOW UNDERSTAND.
I'VE GOT AN IDEA.
BUT I KNEW CAVOR'S MIND.
ANYHOW! YOU!
WHAT ON EARTH--
--DO YOU THINK I'M MADE OF, TO STICK THAT INTO ME? IF YOU TOUCH ME AGAIN...
BY WAY OF ANSWER HE PRICKED ME FORTHWITH.
I WAS MAD WITH FEAR AND ANGER. THERE CAME ANOTHER OF THOSE GHASTLY SURPRISES OF WHICH THE MOON WORLD IS FULL.
MY CHAINED HAND SEEMED TO GO CLEAN THROUGH HIM
HE GRASPED LIKE SOME SORT OF SWEETMEAT WITH LIQUID IN IT.
SPLU-KARKK!
THE FLIMSY BODY WENT SPINNING A DOZEN YARDS AND FELL WITH A FLABBY IMPACT.
I WAS INCREDULOUS THAT ANY LIVING THING COULD BE SO FLIMSY.

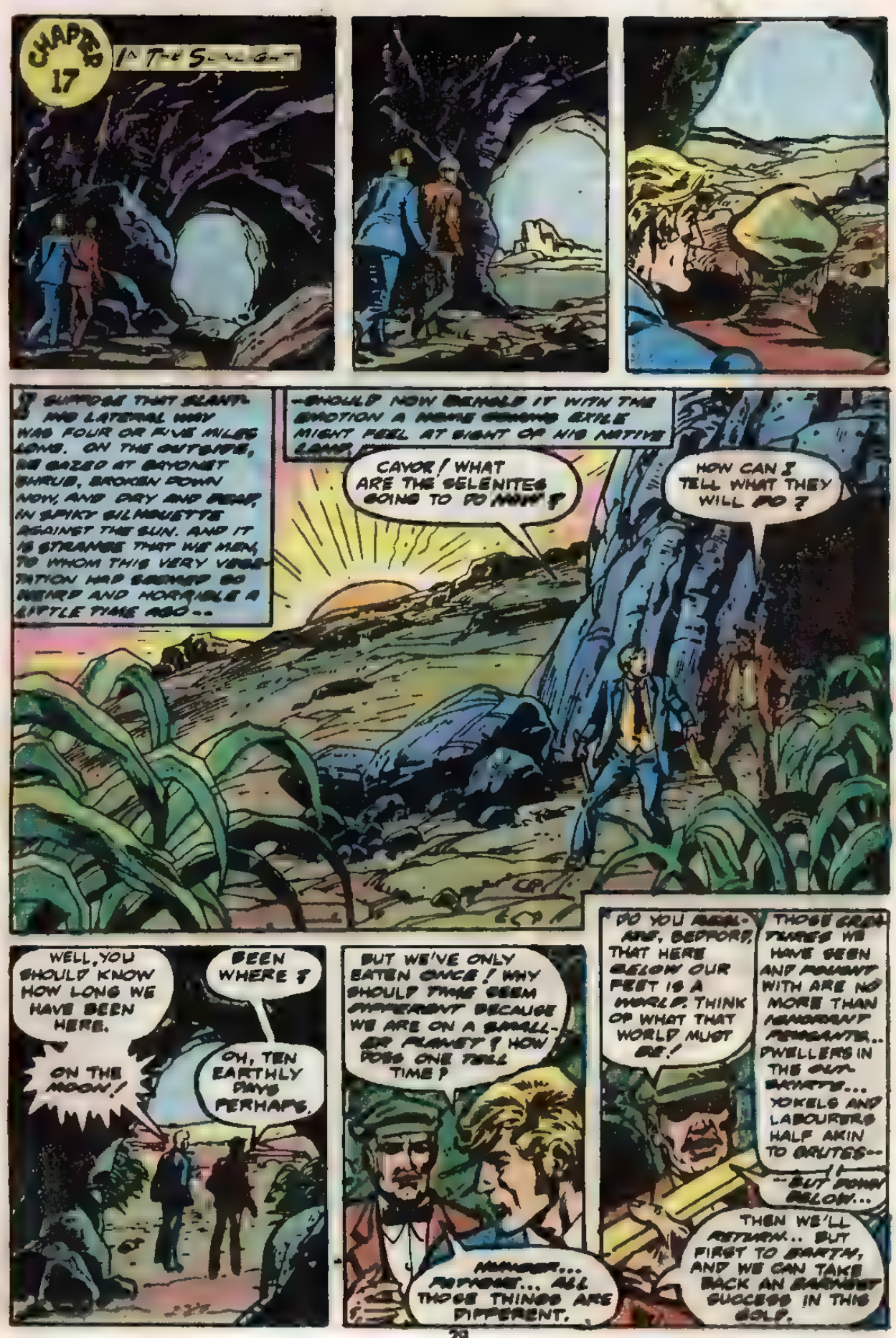
FOR AN INSTANT I COULD HAVE BELIEVED THE WHOLE THING A DREAM.
THEN IT HAD BECOME REAL--
--AND EMINENT AGAIN.
SLITHHH
I BORE HIM TO THE GROUND--
--AND SLIPPED UPON HIS SMASHED BODY AND FELL.
HE SEEMED TO WRIGGLE UNDER MY FEET.
YOU SPOILED IT ALL!
NONSENSE! IT WAS THAT OR DEATH!
WHAT ARE WE TO DO?
HIDE.
YOU CAN USE THESE AS A WEAPON. WE'LL GO UP ONE OF THESE SIDE CAVERNS.
WE RAN IN VAST STRIDES, UNLIKE ANY RUNNING ON EARTH.
WE SHOT THROUGH THE AIR FOR SEVERAL SECONDS, SO THAT IN SPITE OF OUR VIOLENT HURRY, WE HAD PAUSES OF AIR FLIGHT.
BEDFORD, THAT LIGHT... IS IT POSSIBLE--?!!
HE DID NOT DARE TO SAY THE THING HE HOPED...

CHAPTER 15
POINTS OF VIEW!
WE REACHED THE LIGHT. IT WAS A FOREST OF LITTLE CLUB-SHAPED FUNGI, EACH SHINING GLORIOUSLY WITH PINKISH, SILVERY LIGHT.
I THOUGHT IT WAS DAYLIGHT.
DAYLIGHT!
SUNSET, CLOUDS, AND WINDY SKIES! SHALL WE EVER SEE THOSE THINGS AGAIN?
HERE WE ARE BURROWING IN THIS BEASTLY WORLD THAT ISN'T A WORLD--
--AND ALL THOSE THINGS THAT ARE CHASING US NOW... INSECT MEN, THAT COME OUT OF A NIGHTMARE!
AFTER ALL, THEY'RE RIGHT!
WHAT BUSINESS HAVE WE HERE, SMASHING THEM AND DISTURBING THEIR WORLD?
IF WE HAD REFUSED TO BUDGE, THEY WOULD HAVE CARRIED US OVER THE BRIDGE.
I'D RATHER BE CARRIED BY A FLY ACROSS A CEILING.
CAVOR! THESE CHAINS... ARE GOLD!
I FORGOT THAT I HAD JUST BEEN ASKING WHAT BUSINESS WE HAD IN THE MOON ...GOLD!
FINE, BEDFORD, BUT LISTEN... I THINK THE SELENITES WE MET MAY BE ONLY THE EQUIVALENT OF COWBOYS... AND THAT THEIR CIVILIZED WORLD IS FAR BELOW.
YOU'RE NOT INTERESTED IN THE GOLD, ARE YOU? YOU'RE ROOTED AFTER KNOWLEDGE.
WELL A CERTAIN CURIOSITY IS NATURAL.
YOU THINK SO. YOU THINK EVERY OTHER MIND WANTS TO KNOW.
IT ISN'T ONE MAN IN A MILLION HAS THAT THIRST. MOST MEN WANT... WELL, VARIOUS THINGS, BUT VERY FEW WANT KNOWLEDGE FOR ITS OWN SAKE.
I DON'T.
WHEN I CAME TO THE MOON--
--I OUGHT TO HAVE COME... ALONE.

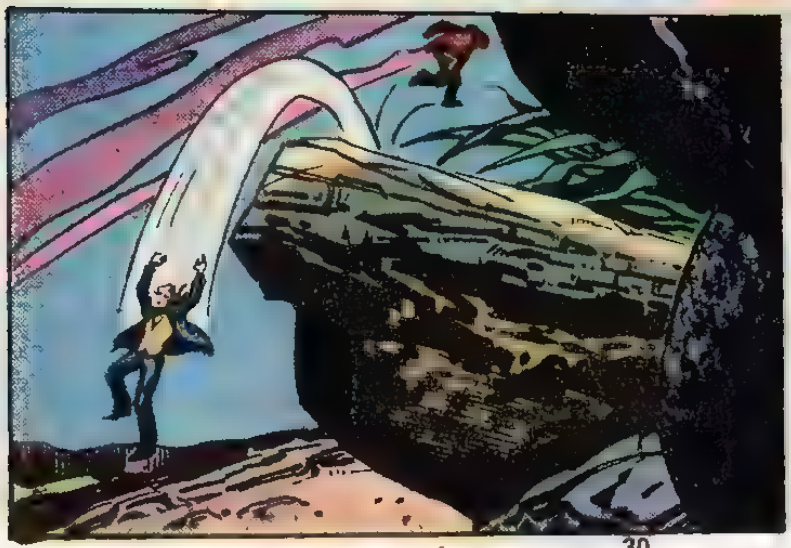
CHAPTER 16
THE FIGHT IN THE CAVE OF THE MOON BUTCHERS!
I DO NOT KNOW HOW FAR WE CLAMBERED BEFORE WE CAME TO THE GRATING.
MY FIRST ENDEAVOR WAS NATURALLY TO SEE WHAT MIGHT BE UPON THE FLOOR OF THE CAVERN BEYOND.
CHID! CHID!
THERE ARE SELENITES DOWN THERE, BUT THEY SOUND OCCUPIED IN SOME WAY. I DO NOT THINK THEY ARE SEEKING US, BUT THE OTHERS ARE HUNTING US BELOW.
DON'T DO ANYTHING --
--HASTILY
IT WAS A MUCH LARGER CAVERN THAN WE HAD SUPPOSED. LYING IN A LINE ALONG ITS LENGTH, VANISHING AT LAST FAR AWAY IN A TREMENDOUS PERSPECTIVE, HUNG A NUMBER OF HUGE SHAPES.
THE SELENITES WERE CUTTING UP THE CARCASSES OF MOONCALVES MUCH AS THE CREW OF A WHALER MIGHT CUT UP A MOORED WHALE.
IT WAS THE SOUND OF THEIR HATCHETS THAT MADE THAT CHID... CHID... CHID.
UNLESS THEY LOWERED THOSE BODIES BY A CRANE, WE MUST BE NEARER THE SURFACE THAN I THOUGHT. THE MOONCALF DOESN'T HOP AND IT HASN'T GOT WINGS.
CHID! CHID!
AND THEN I HEARD A NOISE FROM THE CLEFT BEHIND US!

We twisted ourselves about and lay still as death.
I could hear now quite distinctly the soft twittering of the ascending selenites.
A spear shot out from the grating like the tongue of a snake.
I shouted with triumph as I felt the hold of the selenite resist my pull and give--
--and then I was jabbing through the bars, amidst squeals from the darkness.
An axe hurled through the air, and reminded me of the fleshers of the carcasses.
I turned, and they were all coming towards us in open order--
--waving their axes.
Bedford!
They've got--
--it's like a gun!

THE THING WASN'T A GUN; IT WENT OFF MORE LIKE A CROSSBOW.
CHUZZ!
THUCKK!
I HIT THE CELE-NITE PAIR AND SQUARE. HE COL-LAPSED--
--CRUSHED AND CRUMPLED--
--HIS HEAD SMASHED LIKE AN EGG.
THEY ALL SEEMED TO BE RUNNING LIKE ANTS IN A DISTURBED ANT-HILL. I KNEW WE HAD TO CHARGE.
FOR A MINUTE PERHAPS IT WAS A MASSACRE. I WAS TOO FIERCE TO BE DISCRIMINATE.
I REMEMBER I SEEMED TO BE MOVING AMONG THOSE LEATHERY THIN THINGS AS A MAN MOVES THROUGH TALL GRASS--
--MOVING AND HITTING! LITTLE DROPS OF MOIS-TURE FLEW ABOUT.
I TROD ON THINGS THAT CRUMBLED AND PULPED AND WENT SLIPPERY.
BEDFORD! WHITE LIGHT--
--IT'S WHITE LIGHT AGAIN!


CHAPTER 17
IN THE SUNLIGHT
I SUPPOSE THAT SLANTING LATERAL WAY WAS FOUR OR FIVE MILES LONG. ON THE OUTSIDE, WE GAZED AT BAYONET SHRUB, BROKEN DOWN NOW, AND DRY AND DEAD, IN SPIKY SILHOUETTE AGAINST THE SUN. AND IT IS STRANGE THAT WE MEN, TO WHOM THIS VERY VEGETATION HAD SEEMED SO WEIRD AND HORRIBLE A LITTLE TIME AGO--
--SHOULD NOW BEHOLD IT WITH THE EMOTION A NEWLY RETURNED EXILE MIGHT FEEL AT SIGHT OF HIS NATIVE LAND.
CAVOR! WHAT ARE THE SELENITES GOING TO DO NOW?
HOW CAN I TELL WHAT THEY WILL DO?
WELL, YOU SHOULD KNOW HOW LONG WE HAVE BEEN HERE.
BEEN WHERE?
ON THE MOON!
OH, TEN EARTHLY DAYS PERHAPS.
BUT WE'VE ONLY EATEN ONCE! WHY SHOULD TIME SEEM DIFFERENT BECAUSE WE ARE ON A SMALLER PLANET? HOW DOES ONE TELL TIME?
MMMMM... PATIENCE... ALL THOSE THINGS ARE DIFFERENT.
DO YOU REALIZE, BEDFORD, THAT HERE BELOW OUR FEET IS A WORLD? THINK OF WHAT THAT WORLD MUST BE!
THOSE CREATURES WE HAVE SEEN AND FOUGHT WITH ARE NO MORE THAN IGNORANT PEASANTRY.. DWELLERS IN THE OUTSKIRTS... YOKELS AND LABOURERS HALF AKIN TO BRUTES--
--BUT DOWN BELOW...
THEN WE'LL RETURN... BUT FIRST TO EARTH, AND WE CAN TAKE BACK AN EARNEST SUCCESS IN THIS GOLF.

IF I TAKE MY SECRET BACK TO EARTH WHAT WILL HAPPEN? GOVERNMENTS AND POWERS WILL STRUGGLE TO GET HITHER... THEY WILL FIGHT AGAINST ONE ANOTHER AND AGAINST THESE MOON PEOPLE.
IT WILL ONLY SPREAD WARFARE AND MULTIPLY THE OCCASIONS OF WAR. IN A LITTLE WHILE, IF I TELL MY SECRET, THIS PLANET TO ITS DEEPEST GALLERIES WILL BE STREWN WITH HUMAN DEAD.
OTHER THINGS ARE DOUBTFUL, BUT THAT IS CERTAIN ... IT IS NOT AS THOUGH MAN HAD ANY USE FOR THE MOON.
WHAT GOOD WOULD THE MOON BE TO MEN? EVEN OF THEIR OWN PLANET WHAT HAVE THEY MADE BUT A BATTLE-GROUND--
-- AND THEATER OF INFINITE FOLLY?
THERE ARE METHODS OF SECRECY.
AND IF ONE OF US FINDS THE SPHERE?
AH, WELL, THERE IS LITTLE CHANCE OF US FINDING THE SPHERE. WE MUST SEPARATE, MOVE OUT IN SEMI-CIRCLES TO AND FROM THE SETTING SUN.
RETURN HERE AND SIGNAL THE OTHER.

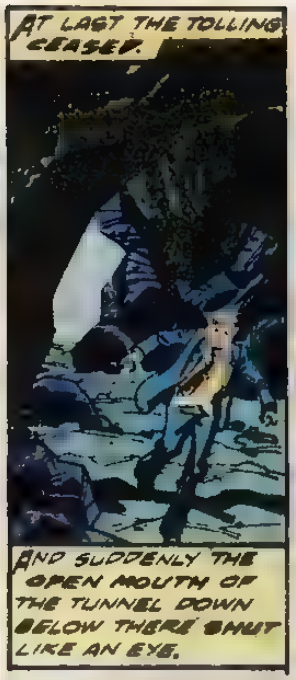


I DETERMINED NOT TO LOSE SIGHT OF THAT HANDKERCHIEF--
--WHATEVER MIGHT BETIDE.

CHAPTER 18
MR. BEDFORD ALONE!
AS I SEARCHED, I WONDERED WHY WE HAD COME TO THE MOON. WHAT IS THIS SPIRIT IN MAN THAT URGES HIM FOR EVER TO DEPART FROM HAPPINESS AND SECURITY, TO PLACE HIMSELF IN DANGER? IT DAWNED UPON ME UP THERE IN THE MOON AS A THING I OUGHT ALWAYS TO HAVE KNOWN... THAT MAN IS NOT MADE SIMPLY TO GO ABOUT SAFE... AND COMFORTABLE... AND WELL FED.. AND AMUSED.
WHOSE PURPOSE WAS I SERVING? ...I CEASED TO SPECULATE ON WHY WE HAD COME TO THE MOON AND TOOK A WIDER SWEEP. WHY HAD I COME TO EARTH? WHY HAD I A PRIVATE LIFE AT ALL?
I WAS OPPRESSED BY THE IDEA THAT THE SELENITES WOULD PRESENTLY CLOSE THE LIDS OF THE CAVERNS AND SHUT US OUT UNDER THE INEXORABLE DARKNESS OF THE LUNAR NIGHT.
ONCE THESE VALVES WERE CLOSED, WITH US OUTSIDE, WE WERE LOST MEN. THE GREAT NIGHT OF SPACE WOULD DESCEND UPON US--
--THAT BLACKNESS OF VOID WHICH IS THE ONLY ABSOLUTE DEATH.
I SAW THE SPHERE!
I DID NOT FIND IT SO MUCH AS IT FOUND ME.

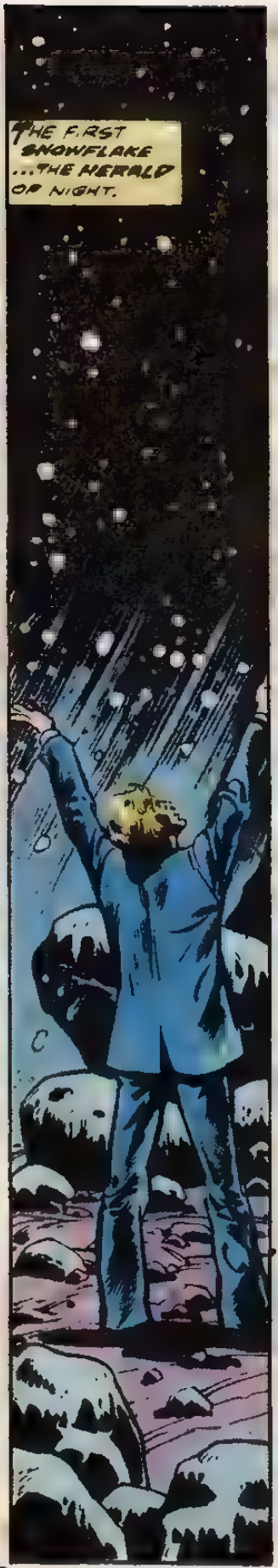
MY LAST LEAP FLUNG ME WITH MY HANDS HARD AGAINST ITS GLASS..
NOTHING HAD BEEN TOUCHED... NOTHING HAD SUFFERED.
I PLACED MY GOLF CLUBS INSIDE.
IT OCCURRED TO ME THAT IT WAS TIME TO GO OUT AND SIGNAL FOR CAVOR.
I SHIVERED AS I EMERGED, FOR THE EVENING AIR WAS GROWING VERY--
--COLD
"CAV--" I BEGAN AND REALIZED ONCE MORE THE USELESSNESS OF THE HUMAN VOICE IN THAT THIN AIR.
STILL NESS. THE SILENCE OF DEATH.
I SAW THE LITTLE CRICKET CAP CAVOR HAD WORN.
ON SOME OF THE SCATTERED BRANCHES THERE WERE LITTLE SMEARS OF SOMETHING DARK--
--SOMETHING I DARED NOT TOUCH.
MY EYE CAUGHT FAINT PENCIL MARKS ON THE PIECE OF WHITE BLOWING IN THE RISING BREEZE.
I have been injured, about know, and I can not run or crawl. They have been like ... to. differ sing me for some sort of selenite alt gether. They have larg brain cases and though I am wounde and helpless here their appearance still gives me hope

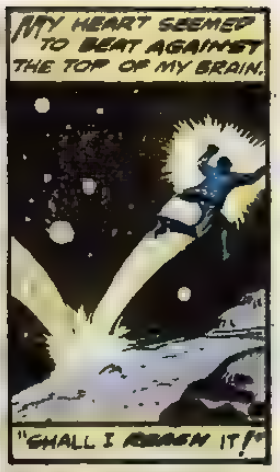
As I REACHED THE CAVERN ENTRANCE, I HEARD THE TOLLING THAT HAD WELCOMED THE COMING OF DAY.
BOOM
BOOM
BO

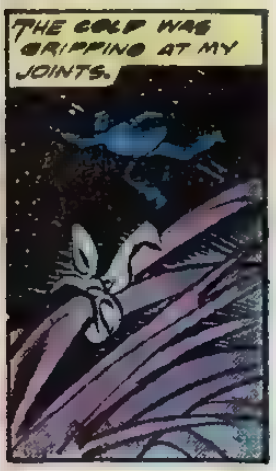

AT LAST THE TOLLING CEASED.
AND SUDDENLY THE OPEN MOUTH OF THE TUNNEL DOWN BELOW THERE SHUT LIKE AN EYE.

THEN INDEED WAS I--
ALONE.

I WAS TWO MILES AWAY FROM THE SPHERE... AND THE AIR ABOUT ME WAS THINNING OUT AS IT THING UNDER AN AIR PUMP.

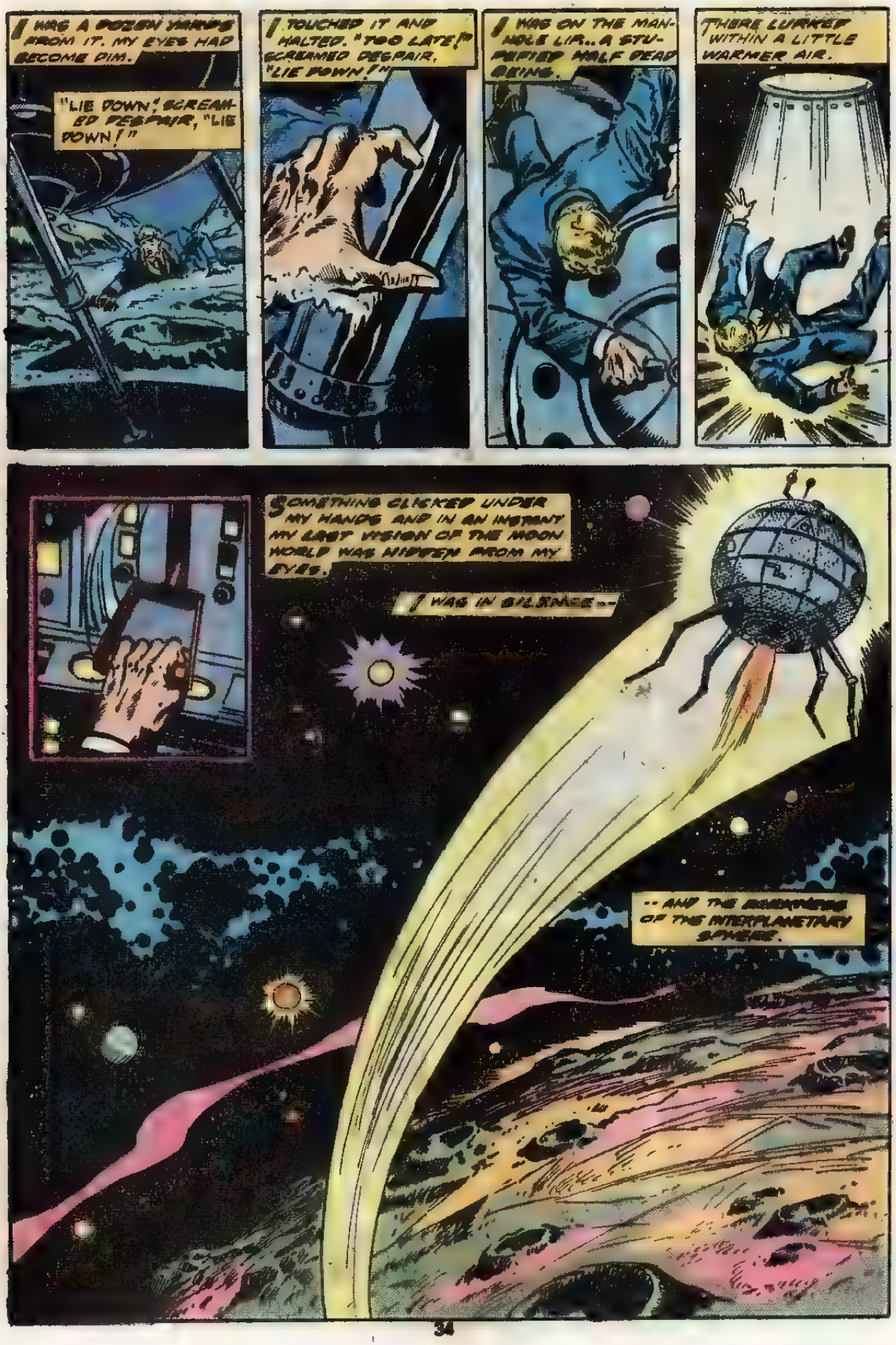

THE FIRST SNOWFLAKE ...THE HERALD OF NIGHT.


MY HEART SEEMED TO BEAT AGAINST THE TOP OF MY BRAIN.
"SHALL I REACH IT!"


THE COLD WAS GRIPPING AT MY JOINTS.

THE NEARER I STRUGGLED, THE MORE IMPOSSIBLY REMOTE IT SEEMED.

THE FROST GATHERED ON MY LIPS... ICICLES HUNG FROM MY MOUSTACHE AND BEARD.


I WAS A DOZEN YARDS FROM IT. MY EYES HAD BECOME DIM.
"LIE DOWN!" SCREAMED DESPAIR, "LIE DOWN!"
I TOUCHED IT AND HALTED. "TOO LATE!" SCREAMED DESPAIR, "LIE DOWN!"
I WAS ON THE MANHOLE LIP.. A STUPEFIED HALF DEAD BEING.
THERE LURKED WITHIN A LITTLE WARMER AIR.
SOMETHING CLICKED UNDER MY HANDS AND IN AN INSTANT MY LAST VISION OF THE MOON WORLD WAS HIDDEN FROM MY EYES.
I WAS IN SILENCE...
-- AND THE BRILLIANCE OF THE INTERPLANETARY SPACES.

CHAPTER 18

MR. BEDFORD IN INFINITE SPACE

* * *

It was almost as though I had been *killed*. One moment, a *passion* of agonizing existence and *fear*; the next, darkness and stillness.

Whatever happened to Cavor, even if he was *still alive*, I was *powerless* to help him. There he must *remain* until I could *summon* our fellow-men to his assistance. Should I *do* that? Sell my *gold*, obtain weapons, provisions and an assistant, and *return* with these advantages to deal on equal terms with the *flimsy people* of the moon.

Sometimes it seemed as though I sat through *immeasurable eternities* like some *god* upon a *lotus leaf*, and again as though there was a momentary pause as I *journeyed* from moon *to* earth. In truth, it was altogether *some weeks* of earthly time.

Always the *sense* of earth's littleness and the *infinite littleness* of my life upon it, was in my thought.

I saw *Bedford* in the sitting room of a *certain lady*, and he was in tears. *Me?* I saw him with that lady in various attitudes and *emotions*.

I saw him hurrying off to *Lympne* to write a *play*, and *accosting* Cavor.

Me? I did *not* believe it.

"Confound it!" I cried, "and if I am *not* Bedford, what *am* I?"

Do you know I had an *idea* that really I was something quite *outside* not only the *world*, but *all worlds*. . .and out of *space* and *time*. . .and that this poor little Bedford was just a *peephole* through which I looked at *life*. . .

And with the *dying* of Bedford—*what then?*

Enough of this *remarkable phase* of my experiences. I set myself to *puzzle* out the conditions under which I must *fall* to earth.

CHAPTER 20
MR. BEDFORD AT LITTLESTONE.
THE SPHERE HIT THE WATER WITH A HUGE SPLASH; IT MUST HAVE SENT IT PLUNGING DOWN.
AT LAST I WAS FLOATING AND ROCKING UPON THE SURFACE OF THE SEA AND MY JOURNEY IN SPACE WAS AT AN END.
A CHANGE IN THE RHYTHMIC MOTION AWAKENED ME. I HAD COME ASHORE UPON A HUGE SHALLOW OF SAND.
IT SEEMED TO ME THAT MY BODY MUST BE SUDDENLY CHANGED TO LEAD.
MOTHER EARTH HAD HER GRIP ON ME NOW.
I KNEW INSTANTLY THAT I MUST BE IN ENGLAND.
MEN ADVANCED, STARING. I DARE SAY I LOOKED A FEROCIOUS SAVAGE ENOUGH.
HULL-LO, MY MAN!
HULLO YOURSELF. CAN YOU TELL ME WHERE I AM?
THAT'S LITTLESTONE. WHAT'S THAT THING YOU'VE GOT? SOME SORT OF MACHINE?
I'LL TELL YOU ALL LATER. I'M DEAF BEAT.
COME UP TO THE HOTEL. WE'LL LOOK AFTER THAT THING THERE.
I CAN'T. IN THAT SPHERE THERE'S TWO BIG BARS --
--OF GOLD.

BUT WHERE DID YOU GET THESE ?
I GOT IT IN THE MOON. LOOK HERE! I'M NOT GOING TO ARGUE WITH YOU NOW. HELP ME CARRY THESE LUMPS OF GOLD UP TO THE HOTEL.
A LEAN BOY WITH A PENETRATING SNIFF PASSED US, IN THE DIRECTION OF THE SPHERE.
HE WON'T TOUCH IT.
I WAS ONLY TOO WILLING TO BE REASSURED.
AS YOU PRESS ME-- I GOT IT IN THE MOON.
THE MOON ?
YES... THE MOON IN THE SKY.
HE DOESN'T WANT TO TELL US.
PLEASE DON'T IMAGINE I'M SURELY OR TELLING YOU UNCIVIL LIES. I GIVE YOU MY WORD OF HONOUR I'VE COME FROM THE MOON.
PHOO-WHEE! LIKE A THERMOS BEING ROCKET!
AND SOMEWHERE A WINDOW WAS BROKEN...
IT'S THAT BOY! IT'S THAT ACCURSED BOY!
I FELT AS THOUGH SOMEBODY WAS POURING PUNK OUT OF A CAN DOWN THE BACK OF MY NECK.
-- SKY HIGH!
I WAS UTTERLY

I WOULD NEVER HAVE CAVORITE ANALYZED NOW, NOR EVEN HOPE TO RECOVER CAVOR'S BODY.

I WAS THE SOLE SURVIVOR... AND THAT WAS ALL.

AT FIRST I HAD HAD A VISION OF WEEPING PARENTS AND ALL SORTS OF COMPLICATIONS--

--BUT NOW I SAW I SIMPLY HAD TO KEEP MY MOUTH SHUT AND NOTHING IN THAT WAY COULD ARISE.

IT IS WITHIN THE RIGHT OF EVERY BRITISH CITIZEN TO APPEAR WHEREVER HE PLEASES AND WITH WHATEVER AMOUNT OF VIRGIN GOLD HE SEES FIT TO ENCUMBER HIMSELF.

I ADDRESSED A LETTER TO NEW ROMNEY BANK, TELLING THE MANAGER I WISHED TO OPEN AN ACCOUNT WITH HIM.

I SIGNED THE LETTER "WELLS" WHICH SEEMED TO ME A THOROUGHLY RESPECTABLE SORT OF NAME.

I GOT AWAY TO ITALY AND THERE IT IS I AM WRITING THIS STORY.

IF THE WORLD WILL NOT HAVE IT AS FACT--

--THEN THE WORLD MAY TAKE IT AS FICTION.

IT IS NO CONCERN OF MINE.

I HAVE TOLD MY STORY... AND NOW I SUPPOSE I HAVE TO TAKE UP THE HORRORS OF THIS TERRESTRIAL LIFE AGAIN.

EVEN IF ONE HAS BEEN TO THE MOON--

--ONE STILL HAS TO EARN A LIVING.

HERE I AM, A LITTLE BETTER OFF THAN I WAS AT LYMPNE, AND THAT IS ALL.

AND CAVOR HAS BOUGHT DEATH IN A MORE ELABORATE WAY--

--THAN ANY HUMAN BEING EVER DID BEFORE.

CHAPTER 21

THE ASTONISHING COMMUNICATION OF MR. JULIUS WENDIGEE!

WHEN I HAD FINISHED THE ACCOUNT OF MY RETURN AT LITTLESTONE I WROTE--

THE END

--FULLY BELIEVING THAT THE WHOLE STORY OF THE FIRST MEN IN THE MOON WAS TOLD.

THE GREATER PORTION OF MY MANUSCRIPT APPEARED IN THE STRAND MAGAZINE, AND IT WAS AFTER PUBLICATION THAT I RECEIVED ASTONISHING NEWS FROM MR. JULIUS WENDIGEE.

WENDIGEE WAS A DUTCH ELECTRICIAN, WHO HAD BEEN EXPERIMENTING WITH A CERTAIN APPARATUS, IN THE HOPE OF DISCOVERING SOME METHOD OF COMMUNICATION WITH MARS--

--WAS RECEIVING DAY BY DAY A CURIOUSLY FRAGMENTARY MESSAGE IN ENGLISH WHICH WAS INDISPUTABLY EMANATING FROM MR. CAVOR IN THE MOON.

MR. WENDIGEE'S CONTRIVANCES FOR RECORDING ANY PUTTING-AHEAD IN THE ELECTRO-MAGNETIC CONDITIONS OF SPACE ARE EMINENTLY ORIGINAL AND INGENIOUS.

WE NEVER SUCCEEDED IN GETTING A RESPONSE TO CAVOR.

BUT CAVOR PERSISTED. HE SENT EIGHTEEN LONG DESCRIPTIONS OF LUNAR AFFAIRS... AND SHOWED HOW MUCH HIS MIND MUST HAVE TURNED BACK TOWARDS HIS NATIVE PLANET SINCE HE LEFT IT TWO YEARS AGO.

SOMEWHERE WITHIN THE MOON CAVOR HAD ACCESS TO ELECTRICAL APPARATUS. THIS HE WAS ABLE TO OPERATE AT IRREGULAR INTERVALS.

ALTOGETHER WE HAVE PROBABLY MISSED QUITE HALF OF THE COMMUNICATIONS HE MADE--

--AND MUCH WE HAVE RE-DAMAGED.

CHAPTER 22

AN ABSTRACT OF THE SIX MESSAGES FIRST RECEIVED FROM MR. CAVOR!

THROUGHOUT, CAVOR SPEAKS OF ME AS A MAN WHO IS DEAD.

"POOR BEDFORD," HE SAYS OF ME, "WAS BY NO MEANS WELL EQUIPPED FOR SUCH ADVENTURES"--

--TO LEAVE A PLANET "ON WHICH HE WAS INDISPUTABLY FITTED TO SUCCEED."

AND THEN HE BECAME INCREASINGLY UNFAIR TO ME.

"ON THE MOON HIS CHARACTER SEEMED TO DETERIORATE.

"HE RAN AMUCK, KILLED THREE AND PERFORCE I HAD TO FLEE WITH HIM AFTER THE OUTRAGE."

IT SAYS MUCH FOR THE TOLERANCE OF THESE BEINGS THAT ON MY RECAPTURE I WAS NOT INSTANTLY SLAIN.

WE RE-ENTERED THE MOON DOWN A GREAT SHAFT, WHICH IS BUT ONE OF AN ENORMOUS SYSTEM OF ARTIFICIAL SHAFTS.

THE ENORMOUS INDUSTRY OF THE SELENITES IN THE PAST FORMED GREAT CIRCLES THAT EARTHLY ASTRONOMERS TOOK TO BE VOLCANOES.

THE SELENITES ALSO BECAME LUMINOUS.

THE LUNAR SEA IS NOT A STAGNANT OCEAN... A SOLAR TIDE SENDS IT IN PERPETUAL FLOW.

STRANGE STORMS AND BOILINGS AND RUSHINGS OF ITS WATERS OCCUR--

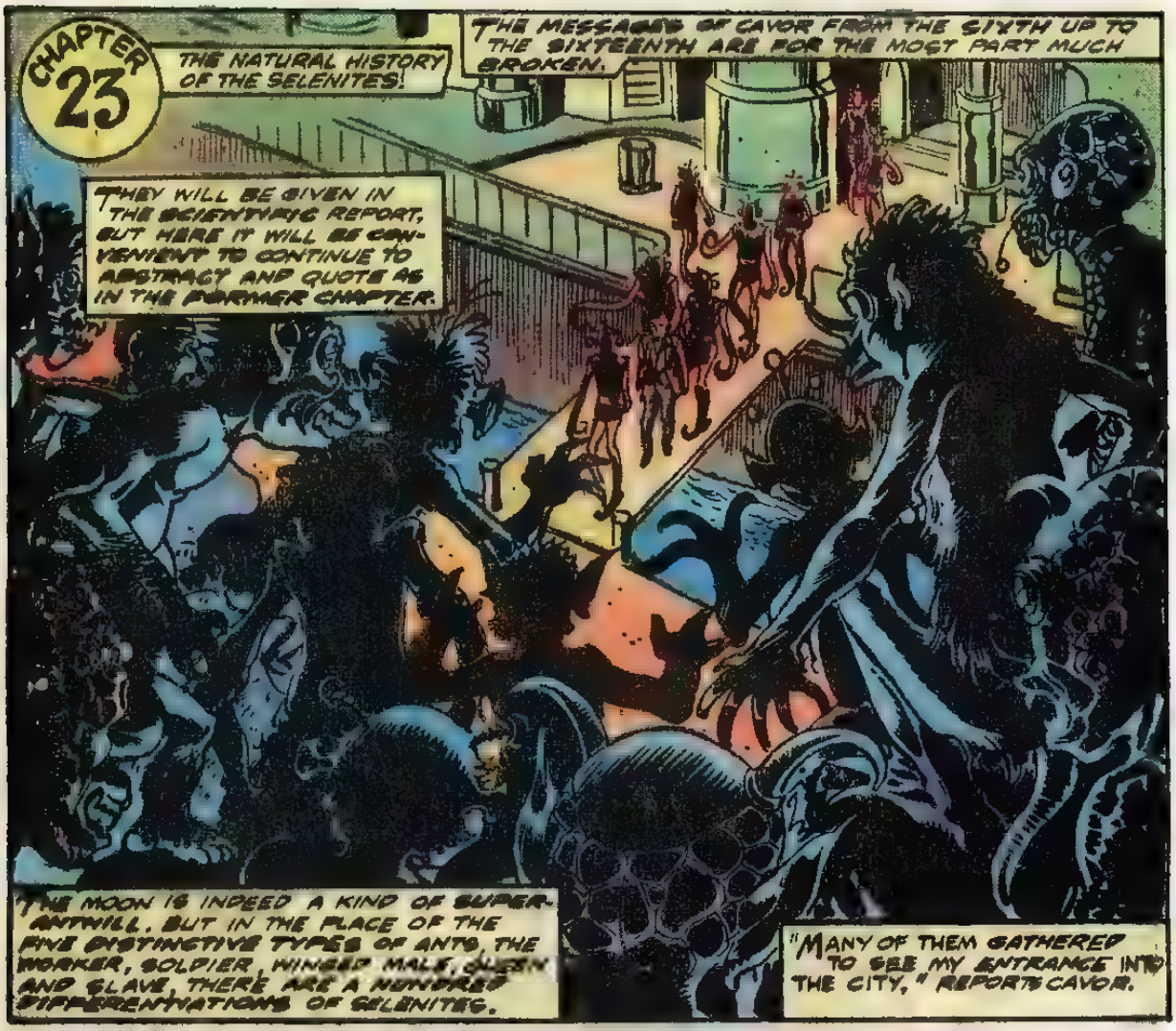
--AND AT TIMES COLD WINDS AND THUNDERINGS THAT ASCEND OUT OF IT INTO THE BUSY WAYS OF THE GREAT ANT-HILL ABOVE.

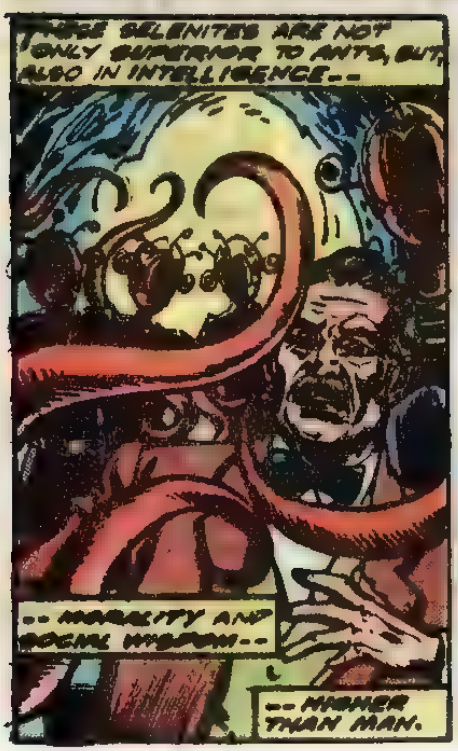
SELENITES CAN BE LOST FOREVER IN THEIR LABYRINTHS.

IN THEIR REMOTER RECESSES, I AM TOLD, STRANGE CREATURES LURK--

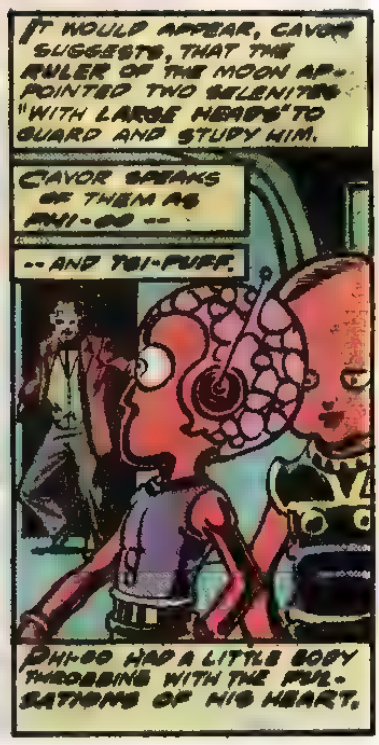
--SOME OF THEM SO TERRIBLE THAT ALL THE SCIENCE OF THE MOON HAS BEEN UNABLE TO EXTERMINATE THEM.

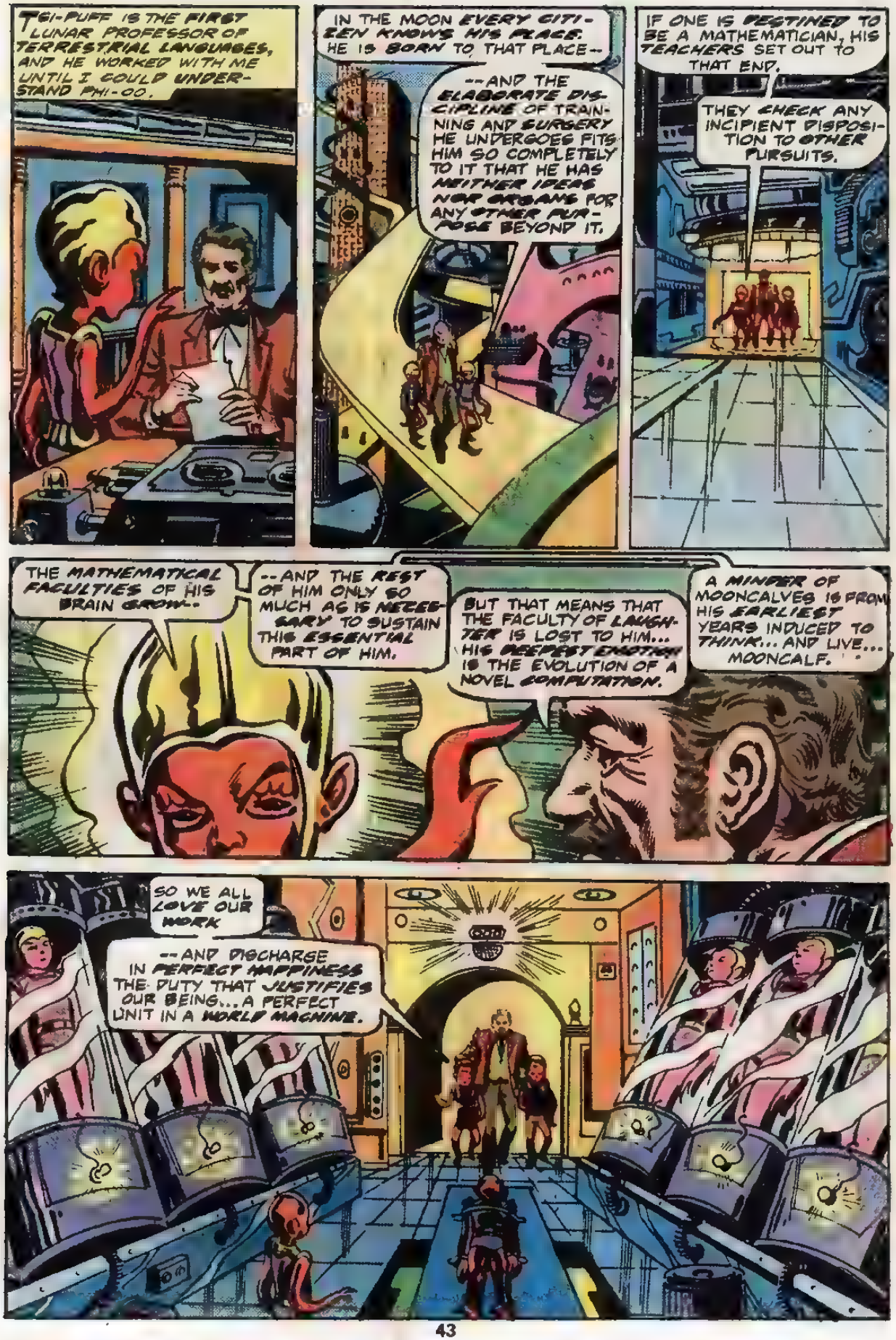
"THERE IS PARTICULARLY THE ALPHA--
"--AN INEXTRICABLE MASS OF CLUTCHING TENTACLES THAT ONE HACKS TO PIECES ONLY TO MULTIPLY--
"--AND THE ZETA--
"--A DARTING CREATURE THAT IS NEVER SEEN, SO SUBTLY AND SUDDENLY DOES IT SLAY.
SOMETHING WAS CAUGHT IN THEIR FISHING NET, A MANY-TENTACLED EVIL-EYED BLACK THING, FEROCIOUSLY ACTIVE.
ALL ITS DISSEVERED LIMBS CONTINUED TO LASH AND WRITHE IN A VICIOUS MANNER.
IT WAS THE MOST MALIGNANT THING OF ALL THE LIVING CREATURES I HAVE YET SEEN IN THIS WORLD INSIDE THE MOON.

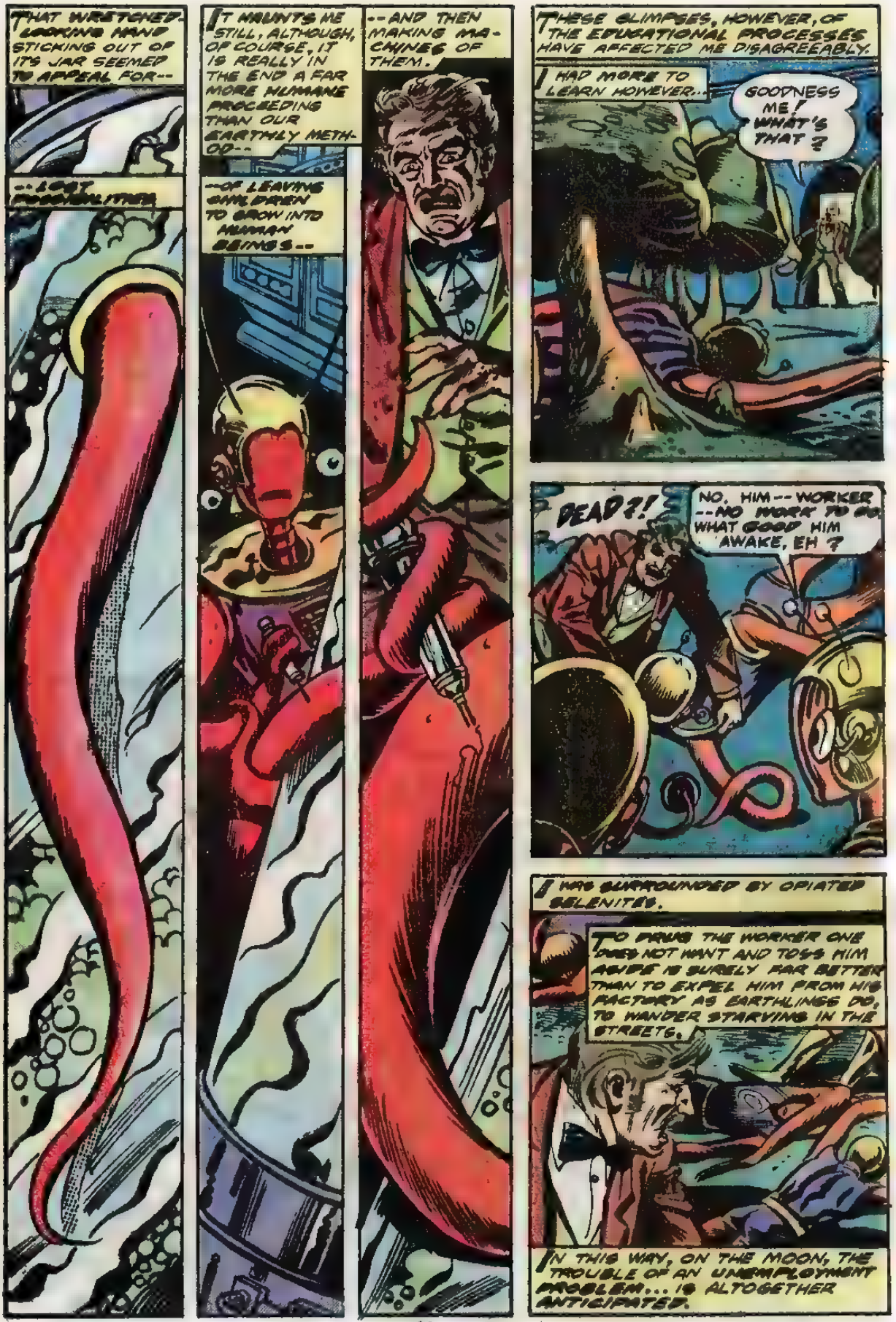

CHAPTER 23
THE NATURAL HISTORY OF THE SELENITES!
THE MESSAGES OF CAVOR FROM THE SIXTH UP TO THE SIXTEENTH ARE FOR THE MOST PART MUCH BROKEN.
THEY WILL BE GIVEN IN THE SCIENTIFIC REPORT, BUT HERE IT WILL BE CONVENIENT TO CONTINUE TO ABSTRACT AND QUOTE AS IN THE FORMER CHAPTER.
THE MOON IS INDEED A KIND OF SUPER-ANTHILL. BUT IN THE PLACE OF THE FIVE DISTINCTIVE TYPES OF ANTS, THE WORKER, SOLDIER, WINGED MALE, QUEEN AND SLAVE, THERE ARE A HUNDRED DIFFERENTIATIONS OF SELENITES.
"MANY OF THEM GATHERED TO SEE MY ENTRANCE INTO THE CITY," REPORTS CAVOR.

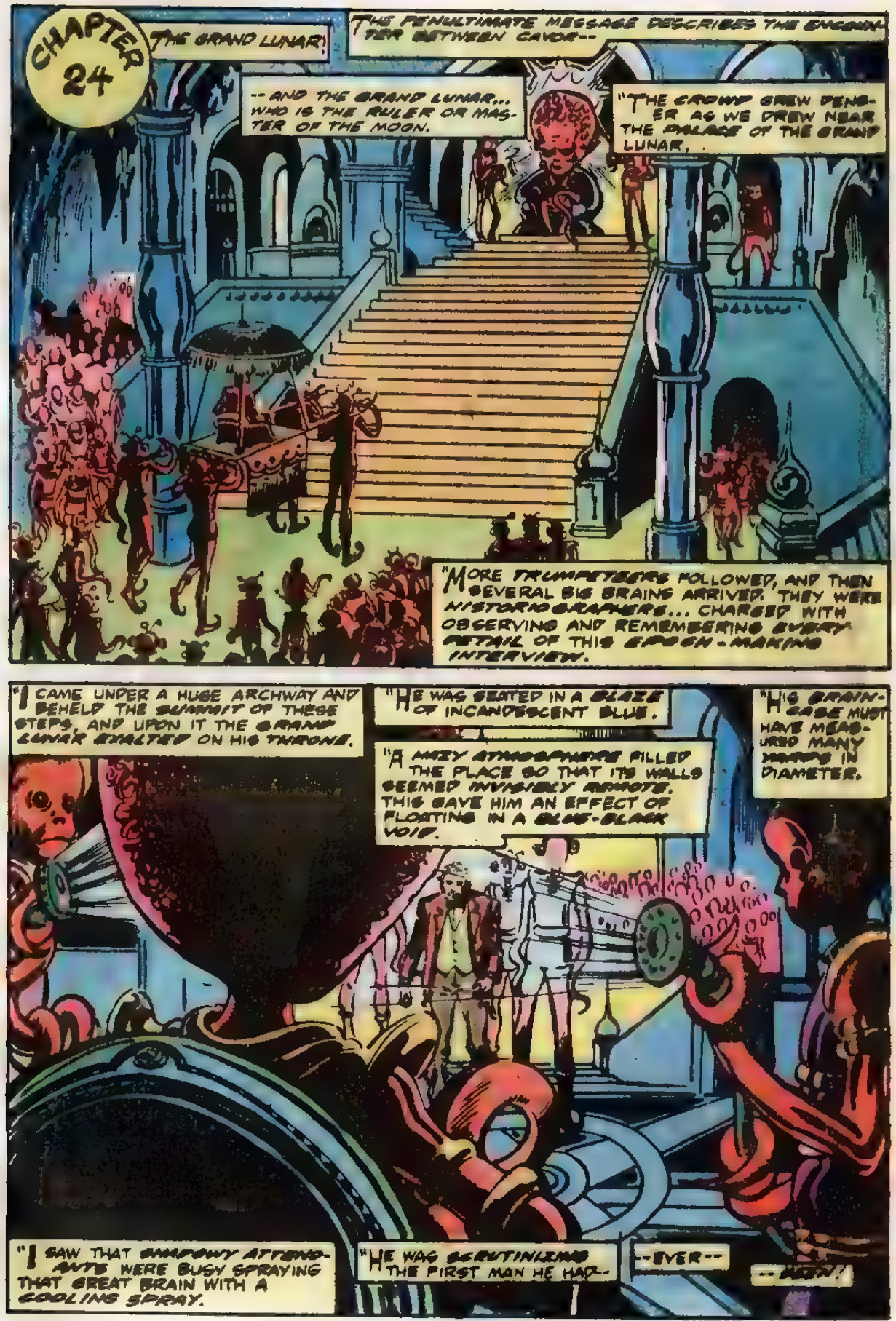

THESE SELENITES ARE NOT ONLY SUPERIOR TO ANTS, BUT ALSO IN INTELLIGENCE--
-- MORALITY AND SOCIAL WISDOM--
-- HIGHER THAN MAN.

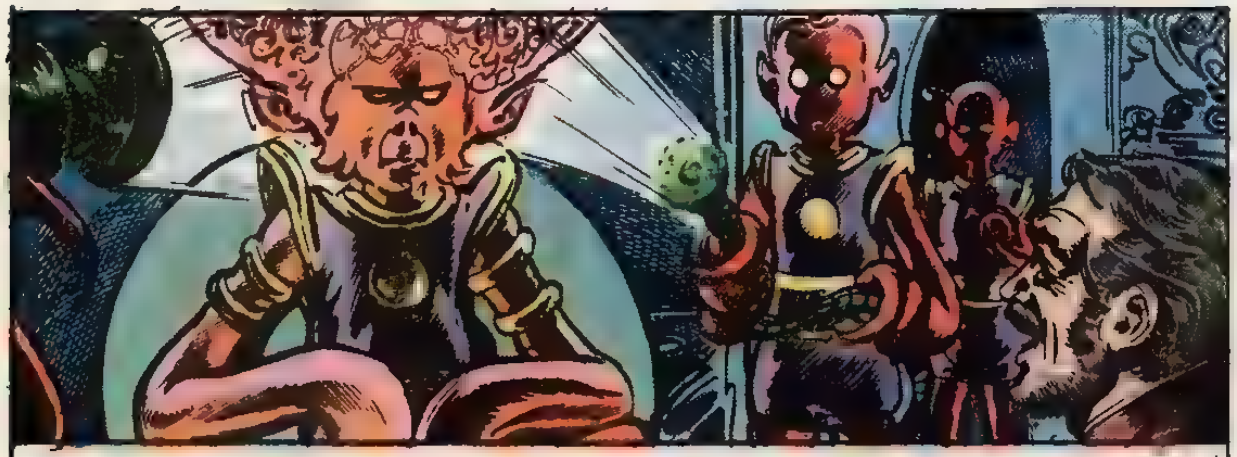
THEY DIFFERED IN SIZE! SOME BULGED AND OVER-HUNG --
-- SOME RAN ABOUT THE FEET OF THEIR FELLOWS--
-- SOME TWINED AND INTERLACED LIKE SNAKES.
ALL OF THEM HAD THE DISQUIETING SUGGESTION OF AN INSECT THAT HAS SOMEHOW CONTRIVED TO BURLESQUE HUMANITY.


IT WOULD APPEAR, CAVOR SUGGESTS, THAT THE RULER OF THE MOON APPOINTED TWO SELENITES "WITH LARGE HEADS" TO GUARD AND STUDY HIM.
CAVOR SPEAKS OF THEM AS PHI-OO --
-- AND TOI-PUFF.
PHI-OO HAD A LITTLE BODY THROBBING WITH THE PULSATIONS OF HIS HEART.


TSI-PUFF IS THE FIRST LUNAR PROFESSOR OF TERRESTRIAL LANGUAGES, AND HE WORKED WITH ME UNTIL I COULD UNDERSTAND PHI-OO.
IN THE MOON EVERY CITIZEN KNOWS HIS PLACE. HE IS BORN TO THAT PLACE--
--AND THE ELABORATE DISCIPLINE OF TRAINING AND SURGERY HE UNDERGOES FITS HIM SO COMPLETELY TO IT THAT HE HAS NEITHER IDEAS NOR ORGANS FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSE BEYOND IT.
IF ONE IS DESTINED TO BE A MATHEMATICIAN, HIS TEACHERS SET OUT TO THAT END.
THEY CHECK ANY INCIPIENT DISPOSITION TO OTHER PURSUITS.
THE MATHEMATICAL FACULTIES OF HIS BRAIN GROW--
--AND THE REST OF HIM ONLY SO MUCH AS IS NECESSARY TO SUSTAIN THIS ESSENTIAL PART OF HIM.
BUT THAT MEANS THAT THE FACULTY OF LAUGHTER IS LOST TO HIM... HIS DEEPEST EMOTION IS THE EVOLUTION OF A NOVEL COMPUTATION.
A MINDER OF MOONCALVES IS FROM HIS EARLIEST YEARS INDUCED TO THINK... AND LIVE... MOONCALF.
SO WE ALL LOVE OUR WORK
--AND DISCHARGE IN PERFECT HAPPINESS THE DUTY THAT JUSTIFIES OUR BEING... A PERFECT UNIT IN A WORLD MACHINE.


THAT WRETCHED-LOOKING HAND STICKING OUT OF ITS JAR SEEMED TO APPEAL FOR--
--I CUT IT OFF WITH
IT HAUNTS ME STILL, ALTHOUGH, OF COURSE, IT IS REALLY IN THE END A FAR MORE HUMANE PROCEEDING THAN OUR EARTHLY METHOD--
--OF LEAVING CHILDREN TO GROW INTO HUMAN BEINGS--
--AND THEN MAKING MACHINES OF THEM.
THESE GLIMPSES, HOWEVER, OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESSES HAVE AFFECTED ME DISAGREEABLY.
I HAD MORE TO LEARN HOWEVER...
GOODNESS ME! WHAT'S THAT?
DEAD?!
NO, HIM -- WORKER --NO WORK TO DO WHAT GOOD HIM 'AWAKE, EH?
I WAS SURROUNDED BY OPIATED SELENITES.
TO DRUG THE WORKER ONE DOES NOT WANT AND TOSS HIM ASIDE IS SURELY FAR BETTER THAN TO EXPEL HIM FROM HIS FACTORY AS EARTHLINGS DO, TO WANDER STARVING IN THE STREETS.
IN THIS WAY, ON THE MOON, THE TROUBLE OF AN UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEM... IS ALTOGETHER ANTICIPATED.


CHAPTER 24
THE GRAND LUNAR!
THE PENULTIMATE MESSAGE DESCRIBES THE ENCOUNTER BETWEEN CAVOR--
-- AND THE GRAND LUNAR... WHO IS THE RULER OR MASTER OF THE MOON.
"THE CROWD GREW DENSER AS WE DREW NEAR THE PALACE OF THE GRAND LUNAR.
"MORE TRUMPETEERS FOLLOWED, AND THEN SEVERAL BIG BRAINS ARRIVED. THEY WERE HISTORIOGRAPHERS... CHARGED WITH OBSERVING AND REMEMBERING EVERY DETAIL OF THIS EPOCH-MAKING INTERVIEW.
"I CAME UNDER A HUGE ARCHWAY AND BEHELD THE SUMMIT OF THESE STEPS, AND UPON IT THE GRAND LUNAR EXALTED ON HIS THRONE.
"HE WAS SEATED IN A BLAZE OF INCANDESCENT BLUE.
"A MISTY ATMOSPHERE FILLED THE PLACE SO THAT ITS WALLS SEEMED INVISIBLY REMOTE. THIS GAVE HIM AN EFFECT OF FLOATING IN A BLUE-BLACK VOID.
"HIS BRAIN-CASE MUST HAVE MEASURED MANY YARDS IN DIAMETER.
"I SAW THAT SHADOWY ATTENDANTS WERE BUSY SPRAYING THAT GREAT BRAIN WITH A COOLING SPRAY.
"HE WAS SCRUTINIZING THE FIRST MAN HE HAD--
--EVER--
--SEEN!!



"THE GRAND LUNAR WAS ADDRESSING ME. IT WAS LIKE THE RUBBING OF A FINGER UPON A PANE OF GLASS.

"HE TOLD ME THAT THE EARTH WAS TO THE MOON WHAT THE SUN IS TO THE EARTH, AND THAT THE SELENITES DESIRED VERY GREATLY TO LEARN ABOUT THE EARTH AND MEN.

I UNDERSTOOD THE GRAND LUNAR TO ASK WHY I HAD TO COME TO THE MOON SEEING WE HAD SCARCELY TOUCHED OUR OWN PLANET YET.

"I TOLD HIM THAT MANKIND STILL WAS NOT UNITED IN BROTHERHOOD, BUT UNDER MANY DIFFERENT FORMS OF GOVERNMENT. THIS ASTONISHED THE GRAND LUNAR VERY MUCH.

"THE GRAND LUNAR WAS GREATLY IMPRESSED BY THE FOLLY OF MEN IN CLINGING TO THE INCONVENIENCE OF DIVERSE TONGUES. 'THEY WANT TO COMMUNICATE AND YET NOT TO COMMUNICATE.'

"AND SO, FOR A SPACE, THOUGH SOMETHING I LOATH, I TOLD HIM THE STORY OF EARTHLY WAR.

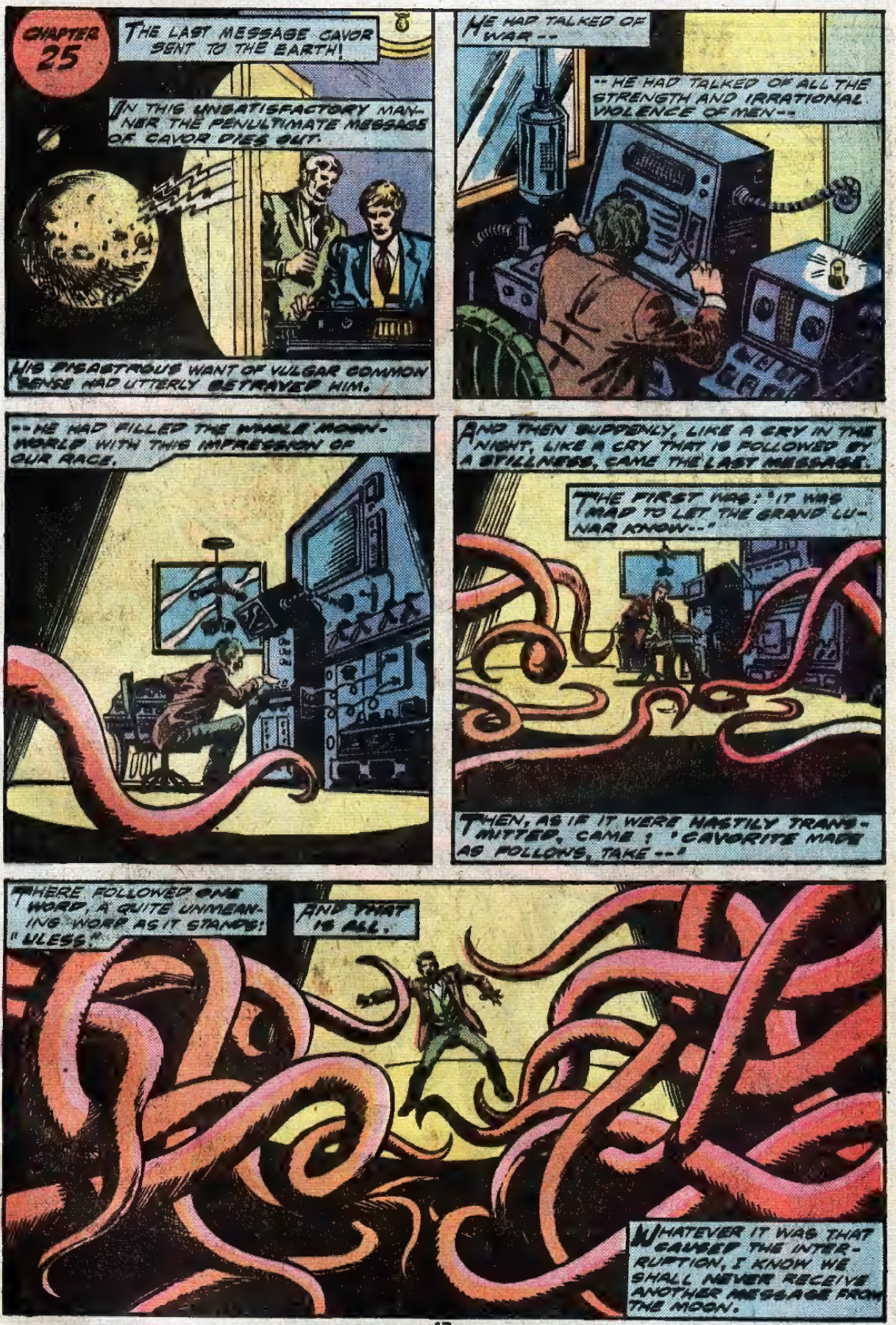
"I TOLD HIM OF THE FIRST ORDERS AND CEREMONIES OF WAR... OF WARNINGS AND ULTIMATUMS... OF SIEGES AND ASSAULTS... OF DESPERATE LAST STANDS AND FAINT HOPES. I TOLD, TOO, OF THE PAST, OF INVASIONS AND MASSACRES.

"'BUT WHAT GOOD IS THIS WAR?', ASKED THE GRAND LUNAR.

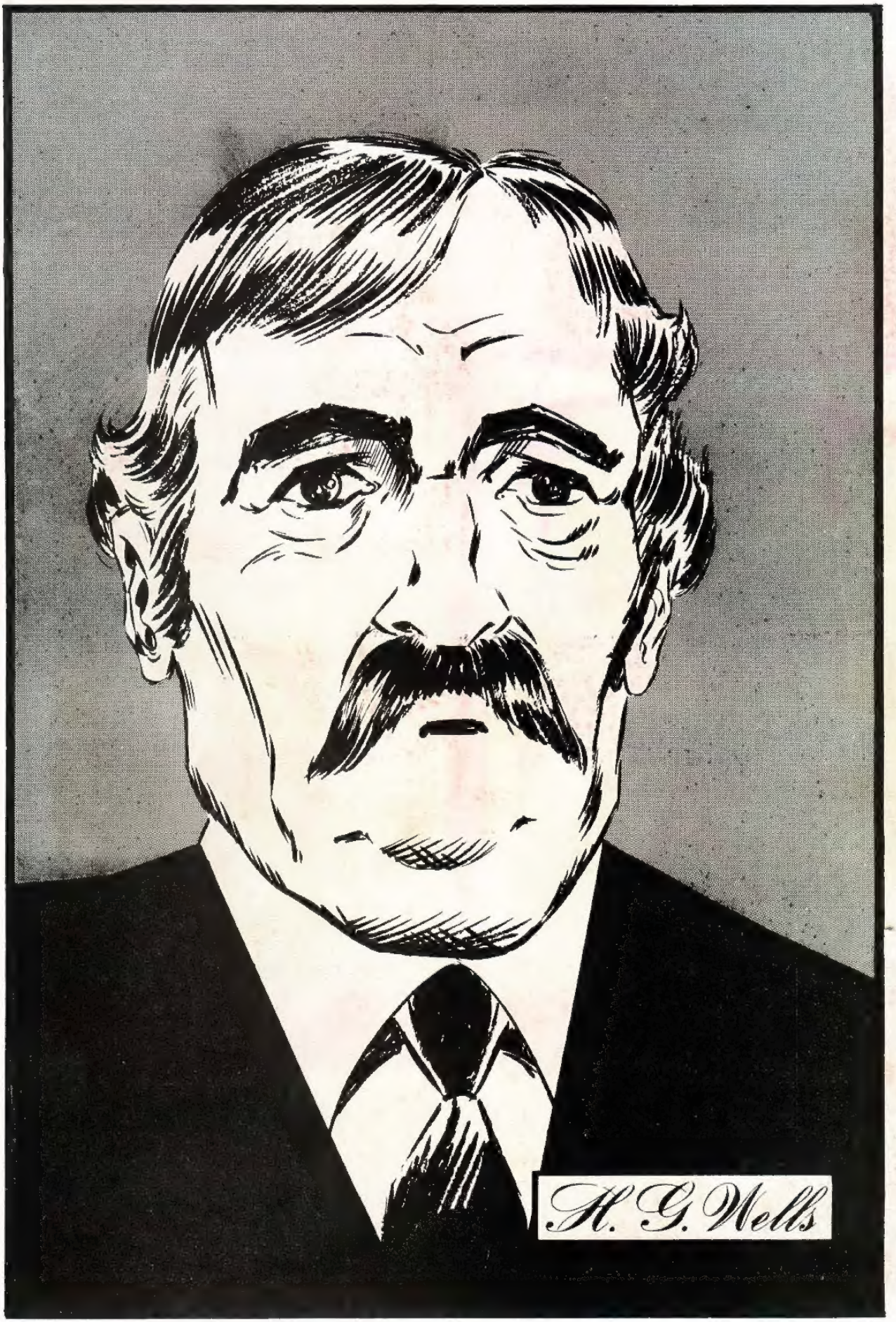
"'OH! AS FOR GOOD!', SAID I, 'IT THINS THE POPULATION!'"

"THERE CAME A PAUSE. THE COOLING SPRAYS IMPINGED UPON HIS BROW, AND THEN THE INTERROGATION REALLY BEGAN.

BOTH MR. WENDIGEE AND MYSELF NOW BELIEVE THIS TO BE THE LAST MESSAGE THAT CAVOR IS EVER LIKELY TO SEND US.


CHAPTER 25
THE LAST MESSAGE CAVOR SENT TO THE EARTH!
IN THIS UNSATISFACTORY MANNER THE PENULTIMATE MESSAGE OF CAVOR DIES OUT.
HIS DISASTROUS WANT OF VULGAR COMMON SENSE HAD UTTERLY BETRAYED HIM.
HE HAD TALKED OF WAR--
--HE HAD TALKED OF ALL THE STRENGTH AND IRRATIONAL VIOLENCE OF MEN--
--HE HAD FILLED THE WHOLE MOON-WORLD WITH THIS IMPRESSION OF OUR RACE.
AND THEN SUDDENLY, LIKE A CRY IN THE NIGHT, LIKE A CRY THAT IS FOLLOWED BY A STILLNESS, CAME THE LAST MESSAGE.
THE FIRST WAS: "IT WAS MAD TO LET THE GRAND LUNAR KNOW--"
THEN, AS IF IT WERE HASTILY TRANSMITTED, CAME: "CAVORITE MADE AS FOLLOWS, TAKE--"
THERE FOLLOWED ONE WORD, A QUITE UNMEANING WORD AS IT STANDS: "ULESS."
AND THAT IS ALL.
WHATEVER IT WAS THAT CAUSED THE INTERRUPTION, I KNOW WE SHALL NEVER RECEIVE ANOTHER MESSAGE FROM THE MOON.

FOR MY OWN PART A VIVID DREAM HAS COME TO MY HELP AND I SEE A BLUELIT DISHEVELLED CAVOR STRUGGLING IN THE GRIP OF A GREAT MULTITUDE OF THOSE INSECT SELENITES--
-- STRUGGLING EVERMORE DESPERATELY AND HOPELESSLY AS THEY SWARM UPON HIM --
-- SHOUTING, EXPOSTULATING, PERHAPS EVEN AT LAST FIGHTING --
--AND BEING FORCED BACKWARD, STEP BY STEP OUT OF ALL SPEECH OR SIGN OF HIS FELLOWS --
--FOR EVERMORE INTO THE UNKNOWN--
--INTO THE DARK--
--INTO THAT SILENCE THAT HAS NO END.


H. G. Wells

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